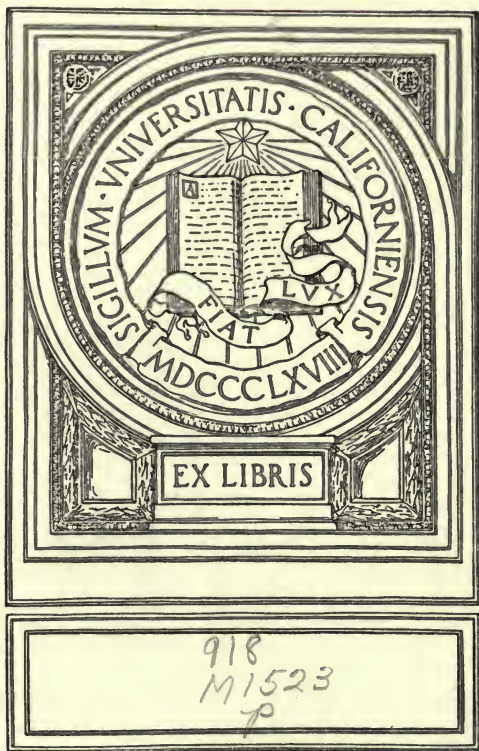


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THE POETS OF AYRSHIRE

FROM THE

FOURTEENTH CENTURY TILL THE PRESENT DAY,

WITH SELECTIONS FROM THEIR WRITINGS.

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

COMPILED AND EDITED BY

JOHN MACINTOSH,

AUTHOR OF

"Ayrshire Nights' Entertainments," "Irvinedale Chimes,"
"Life of Robert Burns," &c.

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THE PORTS OF AFRICA

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DEDICATION.

To WILLIAM BLANE, Esquire,
A distinguished Ayrshire Poet and prominent
Colonial Engineer,

This work is dedicated as a mark of esteem and regard.

"The call of labour and the voice of song
In strength and sweetness lead the life along."

From My Work, page 143.

INDICATION

IN ORDER TO BE ABLE TO
RECOGNIZE THE DIFFERENT
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INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

IN no country of the world has the lyrical gift been more widely diffused than it has been in Scotland, and to no Shire of Scotland have its poets brought more glory and renown.

That Ayrshire owes much of its poetical celebrity to Robert Burns cannot be gainsaid, but even if his writings were wholly eliminated, there still would remain much good work well worthy of preservation. For upwards of a hundred years "the Star of Robbie Burns" has shone with such brilliancy in the poetic firmament of Caledonia that all lesser lights have paled beneath its glance. This is unfortunate for the fame of the lesser luminaries of Scotland in general, and particularly so for the minor bards of Ayrshire. But there are indications that in the near future a larger share of popularity will be awarded such gifted poets as Alexander Montgomerie, Alexander Smith, James Montgomery, and many others who have permanently enriched our Scottish minstrelsy.

Love and labour, domestic joys and sorrows, are the themes to which by far the greater number of our Ayrshire poets have tuned their harp-strings, and for one piece of a romantic or heroic kind we have a dozen poems of the affections. In a certain sense this is to be regretted, and the hope is cherished that a greater number of our modern bards may yet turn their attention to themes such as were dear to the ballad-makers of old, since Ayrshire is a land peculiarly rich in historical associations which would furnish excellent material for compositions of this kind.

If in these latter days we have to deplore a lack of originality in poetical composition, it should be remembered that for

centuries the field of Poesy has been carefully gleaned and the accumulated harvest of song is rich and overflowing, the modern minstrel being "pent by all the garnered wealth of ages of past song," and we may well ponder and ask the question—

Of what can modern minstrels sing
 That poets have not sung before—
 Still harping on the rusty string
 Which Homer struck in days of yore?
 Our modern bards find richest ore
 In veins which ancient minstrels mined,
 And ring the change, for evermore,
 On worn-out thoughts—re-cast, refined.

Nevertheless every age has its poets and rhymers, and it is hoped that a general survey of the Ayrshire Muse from the fourteenth century down to the present day will be of interest to students, as well as to lovers of Scottish poetry. Our knowledge of the early "Makars" is very imperfect, and but few of their compositions remain to testify their poetic skill. Enough is known, however, to convince us that while a goodly number of them moved in aristocratic circles, it is chiefly to the humbler ranks we owe the full measure of our lyrical and ballad compositions. Many of those obscure bards, whose works still delight and interest us, were of so humble origin that not the slightest clue to their identity is known. Singing the praises of others, and hoisting friend and foe alike on to the pedestal of perpetual fame, they themselves went down to the grave "unwept, unhonoured, and unsung."

The unprecedented increase in the number of Ayrshire poets and rhymers since the death of Robert Burns may be attributed partly to his influence and partly to better educational opportunities. This increase has rendered the work of selection a very difficult one, and in our desire to represent every shade and variety of talent it may be that we have admitted into our poetical Eden an undue percentage of plants of the common-

garden variety, giving thereby a long handle to the critic "whose truncheon shakes us like the rod divine that shook Olympus." We feign no apology. If the patient reader should happen to scowl over an insipid effusion here and there we beg to remind him that "even the good Homer sometimes nods." On the other hand it is not denied that names and selections have been omitted from this work which might have enriched it, the difficulty of dealing in a single volume with all the matter placed at the disposal of the compiler proving insurmountable.

No pains have been spared, however, to make the work as comprehensive and accurate as possible, and in pursuit of this object the compiler has passed through his hands an almost incredible number of manuscripts, newspaper cuttings, and old books. Many of these are now so scarce that to obtain a copy one might have to await the chance of a life-time, and but for the assistance of friends of the departed poets, and the courteous response of those still in the flesh, much valuable information must have been denied the reader and not a few meritorious selections withheld. In this connection special aid was given by the Rev. W. B. R. Wilson, of Dollar; Mr A. B. Todd, of Cumnock; Mrs Dr Auld, of Kilwinning; the Rev. G. S. Hendrie, M.A., of Dalmellington; and several other friends interested in the work, and to one and all deep indebtedness is acknowledged.

In a similar connection special mention is made of Mr D. H. Edwards, of Brechin, for kindly granting permission to make extracts from his valuable work on "Modern Scottish Poets."

GALSTON, April, 1910.

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POETS OF AYRSHIRE:

PAST AND PRESENT.

Book I.

EARLY POETS FROM SIR HEW OF EGLYNTOUN

TO

WILLIAM SIMSON OF OCHILTREE.

LECTURES ON ASTRONOMY

Part First

Plan I

THEORY OF THE MOTION OF THE MOON

AND OF THE MOTION OF THE PLANETS

SIR HEW OF EGLYNTOUN.

The Eglyntoun family is one of great antiquity and goes back to the time of the De Morvilles, who were Constables of Scotland and Lords of Cuninghame, and of whom the Eglyntouns held their lands.

Sir Hew of Eglyntoun is the earliest known poet belonging to Ayrshire. He was born in 1315, and died in 1377, or in 1381, and was the last of the old Eglyntouns of Eglyntoun. His only daughter and heiress, Elizabeth, was espoused by John Montgomerie of Eaglesham, whose descendants became first, Lords Montgomerie, and afterwards Earls of Eglyntoun. Sir Hew was a person of high distinction, and was Justiciary of Lothian, and one of the Commissioners for a treaty with England in 1361.

His marriage to Egidia, sister of King Robert the Second of Scotland, and widow of Sir James Lindsay of Craufurd, secured for him the lands of Giffin, in the parish of Beith, and of Alliston, in the barony of East Kilbride, besides many other extensive and valuable possessions.

The Eglyntoun family had previously acquired the barony of Ardrossan, belonging to the ancient family of Barclay, by the marriage of the only daughter and heiress of Godfrey of Ardrossan. It will thus be seen that the Eglyntouns were one of the wealthiest and most illustrious families in Scotland. Sir Hew by his near relation to the King possessed great influence at Court, and seems to have carried his dignified honours with all the graces of a true-born nobleman. His contemporaries styled him "the gude Schir Hew," and he was likewise known as "Huchowne of the Awle Ryall"—i.e., Hew of the Royal Court. The poet Wyntoun evidently held a high opinion of Sir Hew's talents, as he speaks of him as a person who was "cunning in literature, curious in his style, eloquent and subtle, and who clothed his effusions in appropriate metre, to the yielding of great delight and pleasure." Sir Hew's departure from this terrestrial scene is signalized by Dunbar in his "Lament for the Makars," where, after referring to Chaucer and Gower, he introduces the following stanza:—

The gude Sir Hew of Eglyntoun—
And eke Heriot and Wyntoun
He has ta'en out of their countrie
"Timor mortis conturbat me."

The chief poems ascribed to Sir Hew of Eglyntoun are:—
"Sir Gawane and the Green Knight," "The Epistle of Sweet

Susan," "The Greit Gest of Arthure," "The Gest Historyale," and "The Gest of Brotyty's Auld Story."

The following specimens will afford a fair sample of our earliest makar's style:—

THE AWNTYRS OF ARTHURE AT THE TERNE WATHELYNE.

I.

In King Arthur tyme ane awntyr by-tyde,
By the Terne Wathelyne, als the buke tellis
Als he to Carelele was commene, that conqueroure Kyde,
With dukes and ducheperes that with that dere dwellys,
For to hunte at the herdys, that lang hase been hyde:
And one a day thay tham dighte to the depe dellis.
To felle of the femmales, in the foreste wele frythede,
Faire in the fernysome tyme, by frythis and fellis.
Thus to the wode are thay wente, the wlonkeste in wedys.
Both the Kynge and the qwene,
And all the doghety by-dene,
Sir Gawane, gayeste, one grene,
Dame Gayenoure he ledis.

II.

And thus Sir Gawane the gay dame Gayenoure he ledis,
In a gleterand gyde that glemit fullle gay:
With riche ribbanes rueerrssede, who that righte redys,
Raylede with rubes, one royalle arraye;
Hir hude was of hawe hewe, that hir heade hidys,
Wroght with peloure, and palle, and perrye to paye!
Schreudedede in a schorte cloke that the rayne schrydes,
Sett oure with safyrs, fullle sothely to saye.
And thus wondirfully was all the wyghtis wedys.
Hir sadille semyde of that ilke,
Semlely sewede with sylke;
On a mulye als the milke,
Gayely scho glydis.

THE KNIGHTLY TALE OF GOLAGROS AND GAWANE.

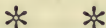
I.

In the tyme of Arthur, as trew men me tald,
The King turnit on ane tyde toward Tuskane,
Hym to seik our the sey, that saiklese wes sald,
The syre that sendis all seill suthly to sane;
With banrentis, barounis, and bernis full bald,
Biggast of bane and blude, bred in Britane.
Thai walit out werryouris with wappingis to wald,
The gayest grumys on grund, with geir that myth gane,
Dukes and digne lordis, douchty and deir;
Sembillit to his summoune,
Renkis of grete renoune,

Cumly kyngis with croune
Of gold that was cleir.

II.

Thus the royale can remove, with his Round Tabill,
Of all riches maist rike, in riall array;
Wes neuer fundun on fold but fenzeing or fabill,
Ane farayr floure on ane feild of fresch men, in fay,
Farand on thair stedis, stout men and stabill:
Many sterne our the streit stertis on stray.
Thair baneris schane with the sone, of silver and sabill
And uther glemyt as gold, and gowlis so gay;
Of silver and saphir, schirly thai schane;
Ane fair batell on breid,
Merkit our ane fair meid,
With spurris spedely thae speid,
Our fellis in fane.



WALTER KENNEDIE.

Walter Kennedie, who holds a prominent place among the early poets of Scotland, is mentioned both by Douglas and Lyndsay as an eminent contemporary. He is styled by Douglas "the greit Kennedie," but his name is even more prominently associated with that of the poet Dunbar by reason of an epistolary warfare indulged in between the two famous "makars," and which is more remarkable for strong and coarse invective than for delicate imagery or refined expression. This amusing encounter of the muses is known as the "Flyting between Dunbar and Kennedie." It was first published in 1508, and soon became the literary diversion of the day.

Walter Kennedie was born at Cassillis House, in the parish of Kirkmichael, and was the son of Gilbert, first Lord Kennedie. He was educated for the Church, and in 1478 took the degree of Master of Arts at Glasgow University. He filled many honourable appointments, being at one time or the other Parson of Douglas, Rector of Glasgow University, Depute-Bailie of Carrick, and Provost of the Collegiate Church, Maybole. His worldly possessions included a mansion-house and extensive lands in Glasgow, where now stands Duke Street prison, besides places of residence in Edinburgh and in Ayrshire. Through the marriage of his grandfather with Lady Mary Stuart, daughter of King Robert the Third, the poet claimed royal kinship. It will thus be seen that Douglas had good grounds for styling him "the great Kennedie." As to Kennedie's personal appearance we have little knowledge, but Dunbar humorously describes his apparel when he pictures him as an Irish cateran, wearing

speckled breeches and rough, hairy shoes made of undressed hides.

Of Kennedie's poems one of the best is that entitled:—

THE PRAISE OF AGE.

I.

At matin hour, in midis of the night,
Wakened of sleep, I saw beside me soon
An agéd man, seemed sixty years by sight,
This sentence set, and sung it in good tune:
O threefold and eternal God on throne!
To be content and love thee I have cause,
That my light youth-head is overpassed and done;
Honour with age to every virtue draws.

II.

Green youth, to age thou must obey and bow,
Thy foolish lusts last scantily ane May;
That which was wit is natural folly now;
Worldly wit, honour, riches, fresh array,
Defy the devil, dread death and doomisday,
For all shall be accused as thou knows;
Blessed be God my youth-head is away;
Honour with age to every virtue draws.

III.

O bitter youth! that seemeth so delicious;
O holy age! that some time seemèd sour,
O reckless youth! high hot and vicious;
O honest age! full filled with honour;
O froward youth! fruitless and fading flower,
Contraire to conscience, loath to love good laws,
Of all vain glory the lantern and the mirror;
Honour with age to every virtue draws.

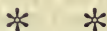
IV.

This world is set for to deceive us even,
Pride is the net, and covetousness the train;
For no reward except the joy of heaven
Would I be young into this world again,
The ship of faith, tempestuous winds and rain
Driving in the sea of Lollerdry her blows;
My youth is gane, and I am glad and fain;
Honour with age to every virtue draws.

V.

Law, love and lawtie, in the grave low lie;
Dissimulance has borrowed conscience claes.
Oaths, writ, wax, seals are nought set by;
Flattery is fostered both with friends and faes;
The son to get that which his father has
Would see him dead; Sathanas sic seed saws,

Youth-head, adieu! ane of my mortal faes;
Honour with age to every virtue draws.



QUINTYN SCHAW.

Quintyn Schaw was born in the parish of Straiton, and was not only a contemporary of Walter Kennedie but a kinsman as well, and the two poets were probably on terms of close intimacy. Schaw died about the year 1505, and is the last of the deceased poets made mention of in Dunbar's Lament:—

And he has now ta'en last of aw,
Good gentle Stobo, and Quintyn Schaw,
Of whom all wightis has pitie;
"Timor mortis conturbat me."

The poet's father, John Schaw, was a person of some rank in his day, and was one of the ambassadors sent to Denmark in 1469 on business relating to the marriage of James the Third. Our poet as well as his distinguished sire was a Court favourite, and had bestowed on him by James IV. a pension of £10 per annum. It would appear, however, that in later years he experienced the inconstancy of royal favour, an estrangement taking place about the year 1504, when payment of his pension was stopped.

As a poet, Quintyn Schaw was probably on an equal footing with his contemporary Kennedie. Both are referred to by Lyndsay in the "Complaint of the Papyngo," where he sets off the qualifications of Ballendyne against our two Ayrshire poets:—

"Ane plant of poets, callèd Ballendyne,
Whose ornate works my wit cannot define;
Get he into Court authoritie
He will excel Quintyn and Kennedie."

Quintyn's name finds a place also in Gavin Douglas's poem, "The Palace of Honour," where he is mentioned as forming with Dunbar and Kennedie a trio of noteworthy Scottish poets.

We know of one specimen only of Schaw's composition. It is a vigorous effusion, and marks its author as no mean versifier.

ADVICE TO A COURTIER.

Suppose the court you cheer and treats,
And fortune on you shines and beats,
I reid¹ you then ware luff! ware lee;²

Suppose ye sail betwixt twa sheets;³
Others hae sailed as well as ye.

If change the wind on force ye mon⁴
Bowline, hookhaik, and shield hold on,
Therefore beware with ane sharp blower;
If ye be wise reflect thereon;
And set your sail a little lower.

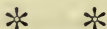
For if you hold your sail oure strek,⁵
There may come gusts ye not suspect.
There may come contrair⁶ ye not know
There may come storms and cause a leak,
That ye maun cap by wind and waw.⁷

And though the air be fair and stormless,
Yet there hold not your sail oure press:⁸
For off high lands there may come slags⁹
At Saint Tabbs Head, and Buchan Ness,
And rive¹⁰ your foresail all in rags.

Be thou vexèd, and at under,
Your friends will shun, and on you wonder,
Therefore beware, with our high lands
Sic slags may fall, suppose a hunder
Were near to help, they have no hands.

Dread this danger, good friend and brother,
And take example before of other;
Know courts and winds have oft-times varied;
Keep weel your course, and rule your rudder;
And thinkna that wi' kings you're married.

1 Advise. 2 Nautical phrases, to steer warily. 3 With two sails furled.
4 Must. 5 Too close hauled. 6 Adverse winds. 7 Wave. 8 Overpressure
of sail. 9 Gusts. 10 Tear.



ALEXANDER CUNINGHAME, Fifth Earl of Glencairn.

The first Cuninghame of Kilmaurs was a vassal of De Morville, the Ayrshire connection of this family dating back to the days of Malcolm and Macbeth. Alexander, the Fifth Earl of Glencairn, was the poet of the family, and one of the most notable of the long line of Earls. He lived in the turbulent days of the Reformation, was a supporter of John Knox and his party, and possessed the courage to deliver with his own hand to the Queen Regent a letter written by Knox with the object of "moving her to hear the Word of God." The Bishop of Glasgow was present when Glencairn delivered the prayerful

document to the Queen, who, after reading it, turned to the Bishop and said:—"Please you my lord, to read a pasquil." After this rebuff Knox thought it prudent to retire for a time, but Glencairn and other reformers subscribed a bond, pledging themselves to establish the Word of God and renounce "the congregation of Satan with all the superstitions, abominations, and idolatry thereof."

Glencairn was known in his day as "the good Earl," and perhaps the deepest shadow resting on his memory is the ruthless way in which, immediately after the accomplishment of the Reformation, he caused to be destroyed the magnificent Abbeys of Kilwinning, Crossraguel, Failford, and other "places and monuments of idolatry."

As a poet Glencairn is known by a satirical piece directed against the Order of Grey Friars. The following extract from this satire is quoted in Mr William Robertson's "History and Historic Families of Ayrshire," where we are told the poem so commended itself to John Knox that the Reformer introduced it in his "History of the Reformation":—

I, Thomas, hermit in Larite,
 Saint Francis' order do heartily greet,
 Beseeching you with firm intent
 To be walkryfe and diligent:
 For these Lutherians, risen of new,
 Our order daily do pursue.
 These smaikis (mean fellows) do set their haill intent,
 To read the English New Testament.
 They say we have them clean deceavit;
 Therefore in haste they maun be stoppit!
 Our state, "hypocrisie" they prize
 And us blasphemis on this wyse:—
 Saying that we are heretikes,
 And false, loud lying mastiff tykes.
 Stout fishers with the Fiend's net,
 The up-closers of Heaven's yett,
 Cankered corrupters of the Creed,
 Hemlock-sowers amongst good seed,
 Kirkmen that are to Christ unkent,
 A sect that Satan's self has sent!
 I dread this doctrine, if it last,
 Shall either gar us work or fast:
 Therefore with speed we must provide,
 And not our profit overslide.

* *

ALEXANDER MONTGOMERIE Of Hasilhead, Beith.

Alexander Montgomerie, the greatest of the early poets of Ayrshire, was born, according to certain authorities, at Hasil-

head Castle, Beith; others affirming that his birth took place in Germany. In either case Ayrshire is justified in claiming him as one of her own poets, since his father was a scion of the distinguished Eglyntoun family, and proprietor of Hasilhead, in the parish of Beith. The poet had relatives who resided in Argyleshire, and part of his early years were spent there and part of his school education there imparted, but little is known or recorded of him until he first attracts attention as a poet by composing a pageant on the occasion of James the Sixth's first entry into Edinburgh. This effusion brought him under the favourable notice of the King, and in 1583 he was awarded a pension of five hundred merks. In 1586 he obtained a royal license to travel abroad, and proceeded to the Continent, where his experiences proved of a somewhat stirring and romantic character. Through some unexplained misadventure he was seized and thrown into prison "to his great hurt, hinder, and prejudice," and as misfortunes usually run in double harness he chanced about the same time to be deprived of his pension, which meant likewise the withdrawal of royal favour. Our poet now for the first time began to feel that "Heaven's gates are not so highly arched as princes' palaces." While basking in the sun of royalty he appears to have held frequent intercourse with King James, who, being himself a poet, would doubtless find much pleasure in Montgomerie's company.

When the King published his "Essayes of a Prentise in the Divine Art of Poesie" he had it prefaced with a commendatory sonnet composed by Montgomerie. The King, also in his treatise, entitled "Rewlis and Cautelis of Poesies," honours the Ayrshire bard by quoting several of his verses as patterns of good composition, and it is said that he was greatly amused by the recitation of the "Flyting between Montgomerie and Polwart"—a poetical burlesque engaged in by the two "makars" after the style indulged in by Dunbar and Kennedie.

In the hey-day of youth and Court prosperity it may be assumed that the poet "sowed his wild oats" in the fashion customary to persons of his station. As he advanced in years and smarted under the bitterness of disappointments, his character suffered a change as shown by the more melancholy and pious bent of his genius. About this period his verse becomes deeply tinged with melancholy reflections.

"If loss of goods, if greatest grudge and grief,
 If poverty, imprisonment, or pain,
 If for good-will ingratitude again,
 If languishing in langour without relief,
 If debt, and dolour, and to become deaf,
 If travel tint, and labour lost in vain,
 Do properly to poets appertain,
 Of all that craft my chance is to be chief."

Alexander Montgomerie has been styled the Pindar of Scotland, and his poetical writings are evidence of his high genius. His muse exhibits a great variety of measures, and it were safe to say that he is the greatest master of poetical measures that Scotland has hitherto produced. Ramsay, Burns, Hamilton, and others copied his style, and for felicity of diction and poetic skill his sonnets compare favourably with those of Shakespeare.

An allegorical poem, entitled "The Cherry and the Slae," is considered the highest flight of his muse. The peculiar measure in which this poem is composed was successfully imitated by Burns. It is generally acknowledged that had Montgomerie devoted his talents to composing simple ballads and lyrics in his native doric instead of dressing his muse, as he almost invariably did, in the trappings of classical mythology, he might have ranked equal with Burns as a national poet.

EXTRACT FROM "THE CHERRY AND THE SLAE."

About ane bank with balmy bewis¹
 When nightingales their notes renewis,
 With gallant goldspinks² gay,
 The mavis, merle, and blackbird proud,
 The linnet, lark, and lav'rock loud
 Saluted mirthful May.
 When Philomel had sweetly sung
 To Progne³ she deplored,
 How Tereus cut out her tongue
 And falsely her deflowered.⁴
 Which story so sorry
 To show herself she seemed,
 To hear her so near her,
 I doubted if I dreamed.

The cushat⁵ coos, the corbie⁶ cries,
 The cuckoo cuks, the prattling pyes,⁷
 To mock her they begin:
 The jargon of the jangling jays,
 The croaking crows and keckling kays,⁸
 They deaved⁹ me wi' their din;
 The painted pawn¹⁰ with Argus eyes
 Can on his mayock¹¹ call;
 The turtle wails on withered trees,
 And Echo answers all.
 Repeating with greeting
 How fair Narcissus fell,
 By lying and spying
 His shadow in the well.¹²

I saw the hurcheon¹³ and the hare,
 In hidlings hirpling¹⁴ here and there
 To make their morning mangle.¹⁵
 The con, the cuning,¹⁶ and the cat,
 Whose dainty downs wi' dew were wet

With stiff mustachis strange.
 The hart, the hind, the dae, the rae,¹⁷
 The fulmart¹⁸ and false fox:
 The bearded buck clamb up the brae
 With bristly bears and brocks.¹⁹
 Some feeding, some dreiding
 The hunter's subtle snares,
 With skipping and tripping,
 They played them all in pairs.

The air was sober, soft and sweet,
 Nae misty vapours, wind, nor weet,
 But quiet, calm, and clear,
 To foster Flora's fragrant flowers,
 Whereon Apollo's paramours
 Had trinkled many a tear;
 The whilk like silver shakers shined,
 Embroidering beauty's bed,
 Wherewith their heavy heads declined,
 In May's rich colours cled.
 Some knopping, some dropping,
 Of balmy liquors sweet,
 Excelling and smelling
 Through Phœbus' halesome heat.

Methought it heavenly heartsome thing,
 Where dew like diamonds did hing
 Oure-twinkling all the trees,
 To study on the blossomed twists,²⁰
 Admiring Nature's alchymists,
 Laborious busy bees,
 Whereof some sweetest honey sought
 To stay their lives frae starve,²¹
 And some the waxy vessels wrought,
 Their purchase to preserve.
 So heaping, for keeping,
 It in their hives they hide,
 Precisely and wisely
 For winter they provide.

To pen the pleasures of that park,
 How every blossom, branch, and bark
 Against the sun did shine,
 I leave to poets to compile
 In stately verse and lofty style:
 It passes my ingine.²²
 But as I mused mine alane
 I saw ane river rin
 Out oure ane craggy rock of stane
 Syne lighted in ane lin.²³
 With tumbling and rumbling
 Among the rockis round,
 Dewalling²⁴ and falling
 Into that pit profound.

To hear these startling streamis clear,
 Methought it music to my ear,
 Where discant did abound;

With treble sweet and tenor just,
 And aye the echo repercust²⁵
 Her diapason sound.
 Set with the Ci-sol-fa-uth cleif,
 Thereby to know the note,
 There sounds a mighty semibreif
 Out of the elphis' throat:
 Discreetly, mair sweetly
 Nor crafty Amphion,
 Or Muses, that uses,
 At fountain Helicon.

Wha would have tried to hear that tune
 Whilk birds corroborate aye abune,²⁶
 Through shouting of the larks,
 Some flies sae high into the skies,
 Till Cupid wakens with the cries
 Of Nature's chapel-clarks,²⁷
 Wha leaving all the heavens above
 Alighted in the eird;²⁸
 Lo, how that little God of Love
 Before me there appeared.
 So mild-like, and child-like,
 With bow three-quarters scant;
 So moylie²⁹ and coylie,
 He lookèd like ane sant.

Ane cleanly veil hung oure his eyes:
 His quiver by his naked thighs
 Hung in ane silver lace,
 Of gold, betwixt his shoulders grew
 Twa pretty wings wherewith he flew;
 On his left arm ane brace:
 This god, off all his gear he shook
 And laid it on the ground;
 I ran als busy for to look
 Where ferlies³⁰ might be found.
 Amazèd I gazèd,
 To see that gear sae gay,
 Persawing my hawing,³¹
 He counted me his prey.

His youth and stature made me stout;³²
 Of doubleness I had nae doubt.
 But bourded³³ with my boy.
 Quoth I: "How call they thee, my child?"
 "Cupido, sir," quoth he and smiled,
 "Please you me to employ;
 For I can serve you in your suite
 If you please to impyre,³⁴
 With wings to fly and shafts to shoot,
 Or flames to set on fire.
 Make choice then of these then,
 Or of a thousand things:
 But crave them and have them."
 With that I chose his wings.

"What would you give, my friend?" quoth he,
 "To have those pretty wings to flee,
 To sport thee for a while?
 Or what if I should lend thee here
 My bow and all my shooting gear,
 Somebody to beguile?"
 "That gear," quoth I, "cannot be bought,
 Yet I would have it fain."
 "What if," quoth he, "it cost thee nought
 But rendering it again?"
 His wings then he brings then
 And bound them on my back;
 "Go fly now," quoth he now;
 And so my leave I tak.³⁵

I sprang up on Cupido's wings,
 Who bow and quiver both resigns
 To lend me for ane day;
 As Icarus with borrowed flight,
 I mounted higher nor I might;
 Oure perilous ane play.
 Then forth I drew that deadly dart,
 Whilk sometime shot his mother,
 Wherewith I hurt my wanton heart,
 In hope to hurt ane other.
 It hurt me, it burt³⁶ me,
 The oftener I it handle;
 Come see now in me now,
 The butterfly and candle.

As she delights into the lowe,³⁷
 Sae I was browdin³⁸ in my bow,
 As ignorant as scho;
 And as she flies till she be fired,
 Sae with the dart that I desired,
 My hand has hurt me too,
 As foolish Phaëton, by suit,
 His father's cart obtained,
 I longed in Lovis bow to shoot,
 But wist not what it meant.
 Mair wilful than skilful,
 To fly I was so fond,
 Desiring, impyring;
 And sae was seen upon.

Too late I know who heaves too high,
 The spail³⁹ shall fall into his eye:
 Too late I went to schools!
 Too late I heard the swallow preach;
 Too late Experience does teach—
 The Schoolmaster of fools!
 Too late to find the nest I seek,
 When all the birds are flown;
 Too late the stable door I steik⁴⁰
 When all the steeds are stown;⁴¹
 Too late aye their state aye,
 All foolish folk espy:

Behind so, they find no
Remeid, and so do I.

If I had ripely been advised,
I had not rashly enterprised
To soar with borrowed pens;
Nor yet had 'sayed the archer craft,
Nor shot myself with sic a shaft,
As reason quite miskens.
Frae willfulness gave me my wound
I had nae force to flee;
Then came I groaning to the grund;
"Friend, welcome hame," quoth he.
"Where flew ye, whom slew ye,
Or wha brings hame the booting?"⁴²
"I see now," quoth he now,
"Ye have been at the shooting."

1 Boughs. 2 Goldfinches. 3 Swallow. 4 From Ovid's 6th Metamorphosis.
5 Wood pigeon. 6 Carrion crow. 7 Pyets. 8 Jackdaws. 9 Deafened.
10 Peacock. 11 Mate. 12 From Ovid's 3rd Metamorphosis. 13 Hedgehog.
14 Creeping crazily. 15 Meal. 16 Rabbit and squirrel. 17 Doe and roe.
18 Polecat. 19 Badgers. 20 Twigs. 21 Starvation. 22 Ingenuity.
23 Pool. 24 Descending obliquely. 25 Reverberated. 26 Above. 27 Sing-
ing birds. 28 Earth. 29 Mildly. 30 Wonders. 31 Perceiving my hesita-
tion. 32 Bold. 33 Jested. 34 Hold sway. 35 Take. 36 Burned. 37 Flame.
38 Foolishly fond of. 39 Splinter mote. 40 Bolt or bar. 41 Stolen.
42 Booty.

HEY! NOW THE DAY DAWS!

Hey! now the day daws!¹
The jolly cock craws;
Now shrouds the shaws
Through Nature anon;
The thrissle-cock cries
On lovers wha lies;
Now skails the skies;
The night is near gone.

The fields oureflow
With gowans that grow,
Where lilies like lowe is,
As red as the rowan,
The turtle that true is
With notes that reneweth
Her pairtie² pursueth,
The night is near gone.

Now harts with hinds
Conform to their kinds,
High tursis their tynds³
On ground where they groan,
Now hedgehogs and hares
Aye passeth in pairs,
Which duly declares
The night is near gone.

The season excels
 Through sweetness that smells,
 Now Cupid compels
 Our hearts each one;
 On Venus wha waits
 To muse on our mates,
 Syne sing for their sakes,
 The night is near gone.

All courageous knightis
 Against the day dichtis⁴
 The breast-plate that bricht is,
 To fight with their fone.⁵
 The eager steed stamps,
 Through curage and cramps,
 Syne on the land lamps
 The night is near gone.

The warriors on fields
 That wight weapons wield
 With shining bright shields
 As Titan on throne
 Stiff spears in reists
 Ouer cursoris crests,
 Are broke on their breasts,
 The night is near gone.

So hard are they hittis
 Some swayis and some sittis,
 And some perforce fittis,⁶
 On ground till they groan.
 Syne grooms that gay is
 On blonks⁷ that brayis
 With swords assayis,
 The night is near gone.

1 Dawns. 2 Partner. 3 Toss their horns. 4 Polishes. 5 Foes.
 6 Change places. 7 Neighing horses.

TO HIS MISTRESS.

Bright amorous ee where Love in ambush lies—
 Clear crystal tear distilled at our depart;¹
 Sweet secret sigh more piercing than a dart—
 Enchanting voice, bewitcher of the wise—
 White ivory hand whose thrust² my fingers prize,
 I challenge you, the causers of my smart,
 As homicides and murderers of my heart,
 In Reason's court to suffer ane assize.
 But oh! I fear, yea rather wot I weill,
 To be repledged ye plainly will appeal
 To Love, whom Reason never could command.
 But, since I canot better mine estate,
 Yet, while I live, at least I shall regrate
 Ane ee, a tear, a sigh, a voice, a hand.

1 Departure. 2 Pressure.

SONNETS IN PRAISE OF THE KING'S URANIA.

I.

Bellona's son, of Mars the chosen child,
 Minerva's wit and Mercury's golden tongue,
 Apollo's light that ignorance exiled,
 From Jove ingendered and from Pallas sprung;
 Thy Uranie, O Second Psalmist! sung
 Triumphs oure death, in register of fame;
 Wherefore thy trophy trimly shall be hung
 With laurel green eternizing thy name,
 But even as Phœbus' shining does ashame
 Diana, with her borrowed beams, and blind;
 So when I press thy praises to proclaim,
 Thy weighty words make mine appear but wind,
 Yet worthy Prince! thou would take in good part
 My will for weel: I want but only art.

II.

Of Titan's harp sith thou intones the strings,
 Of ambrose and of nectar so thou feeds,
 Not only other poets thou outsprings
 But whiles, also thy very self exceeds:
 Transporting thee as ravished, when thou reads
 Thine own invention, wondering at thy wit,
 What marvel then though our fordullèd heads
 And blunter brains be mair amazed at it;
 To see thy years and age whilks thou has yet,
 Inferior far to thy so grave ingine,
 Wha hazard at so high a mark, and hit,
 In English, as this Urania of thine;
 Wherefore thy name, O Prince! eternal rings
 Whose muse, not Jove, but great Jehovah sings.

III.

As bright Apollo staineth every star
 With golden rays when he begins to rise,
 Whose glorious glance yet stoutly skails the skies,¹
 When with a wink we wonder where they are,
 Before his face for fear they fade so far,
 And vanishes away in such a wise,
 That in their spheres they dare not enterprise
 For to appear like planets as they are;
 Or as the Phœnix, with her fedrum fair²
 Excels all fowls in diverse heavenly hues,
 Whose nature, contrar nature she renews
 As only but companion or compair³
 So quintessenst of kings; when thou compile,
 Thou stains my verses with thy stately style.

1 Blots out the stars. 2 Fair feathers. 3 Peer.

SONG ON THE LADY MARGARET MONTGOMERIE,
DAUGHTER OF HUGH, THIRD EARL OF EGLIN-
TOUN.

Luifaris¹ leive of to loif so hie
Your ladies; and them style no mair
But peir, the eirthlie "A per se,"
And flow'r of feminine maist fair:
Since there is ane without compare,
Sic titles in your sangs delete;
And praise the peerless preclair,²
Montgomerie—maikles³ Margareit,

Quhose⁴ port, and peerless pulchritude,
Fair form, and face angelical,
Sua meek, and full of mansuetude,
With virtue supernatural;
Makdome, and proper members all,
Sa perfect, and with joy replete,
Proves her, but⁵ peir or peregall,
Of maids the maikles Margareit.

Sae wise in youth, and virtuous
Sic reason for to rule the rest,
As in greit age wer marvellous
Sua mannerly, mild, and modest,
Sa grave, sa gracious, and digest;
And in all doings sa discreit,
The maist benign, and bonniest,
Mirror of maidens Margareit.

Pigmalyon, that ane portratour,
Be painting craft, did sa decoir,
Himself therewith in paramour,
Fell suddenly; and smert thairfoir,
Wer he alive, he wad deploir
His folly, and his love forleit,
This fairer patrane to adoir,
Of maids the makeless Margareit,

Or had this nymph been in these days
When Paris judged in Helicon,
Venus had not obtained sic praise,
She, and the goddesses ilk one,
Would have prefert this paragon,
As marrowit, but matche, most meit,
The golden ball to bruik alone;
Marvelling in this Margareit.

Whose noble birth and royal bluid,
Her better nature does exceed,
Her native gifts and graces guid,
Sua bounteously declare indeed.
As wail, and wit of womanheid,
That sa with virtue does ourfeit,
Happy is he that sall posseid
In marriage this Margareit!

Help, and grant hap, guid Hymené!
 Lat not thy pairt in her inlaik,
 Nor lat not doleful destiny,
 Mishap, or fortune, work her wraik,
 Grant like unto herself ane maik!
 That will her honour, love, and treit;
 And I sall serve him for her sake,
 Fairweill, my Mistress Margareit.

1 Lovers. 2 Pearl. 3 Mateless. 4 Whose. 5 Without comparison.

From the above tribute to Lady Montgomerie as well as various other poems addressed to her by the poet, it appears that he was smitten with the charms of one who was universally acknowledged to be "the fairest of the fair" of her time. The poet was not successful in wooing her, however, as Lady Montgomerie became the wife of Robert First Earl of Winton.



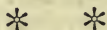
HEW BARCLAY.

The powerful family of Barclay figures prominently in the early history of Cuninghame. Hew Barclay, the poet, was the son of David Barclay of Ladyland, who fought on the side of Queen Mary at the battle of Langside. The poet appears to have held Popish principles in keeping with his father, and early in life found it convenient to quit the country for a time. He, however, returned in 1587, and soon began to avail himself of every opportunity for aiding the Popish cause, and engaged in a plot, hatched and sanctioned by the Earls of Huntly, Angus, and Errol, to re-establish Popery in Scotland. The scheme was a bold one. Letters and papers were despatched to the King of Spain by a person named Kerr; but Andrew Knox, the minister of Paisley, aided by some students and others from Glasgow, apprehended Kerr in the Island of Cumbrae, and on the papers being examined it was found that the King of Spain was to have landed 30,000 men on the West Coast of Scotland for the purpose of suppressing Protestantism. Kerr admitted his guilt, and turned accuser against Barclay and others implicated in the plot. The Earls were denounced rebels, and Barclay was sent to the jail of Edinburgh. King James, who connived at the plot, ordered his liberation after five days' confinement; but the Presbyterian clergy kept a watch over him, and he was again apprehended and lodged in the Castle of Glasgow. Aided no doubt by powerful friends, he succeeded in effecting an escape, and fled for a time to Spain. The Spanish Invasion of Scotland was still the uppermost thought in his mind, and while exiled in

Spain his busy brain contrived the idea of fortifying Ailsa Craig, and using it as a base for the Spanish forces. With this scheme in view he returned to Scotland and took possession of Ailsa, being supported by a number of his friends. The scheme proved a ruinous one for the adventurous poet. The minister of Paisley becoming aware of the threatened danger, gathered to himself a party of friends, and secretly set sail for Ailsa Rock. Barclay's associates chanced to be on another part of the Craig when he observed Knox and his party approaching, and thinking them to be friends he awaited their arrival on the shore alone. As they drew nearer he recognised his enemies, and to avoid the capture and disgrace which seemed inevitable, he plunged into the sea and pledged for Popery no more.

Hew Barclay was a friend and companion of Alexander Montgomerie, the author of "The Cherry and the Slae." To Montgomerie he addressed two sonnets which were printed in Dr Irving's edition of Montgomerie's Poems. One of those will serve as a specimen of Barclay's muse:—

My best belovit brother of the craft,
 God! gif ye knew the state that I am in;
 Though ye be deif, I know ye are not daft,
 Bot kynd enough to ane of your ain kin,
 If ye bot saw me in this winter win'
 With old bogogers, hotching on a sped,
 Draiglitt in dirt, whiles wat even to the skin,
 I trow there should be tears or we twa shed.
 Bot maist of all, that hes my bailis bred,
 To hear how ye on that side of the moor
 Birls at the wine, and blythlie goes to bed,
 Forgetting me, poor pleuman, I am sure,
 Lo, silly I, opprest with barmie jugs,
 Envyis your state, that's pouing Bacchus' luggs.



THE REV. ZACHARY BOYD.

This scholarly divine was descended from the Boyds of Penkill, and was born at Kilmarnock, where he received his school education, afterwards passing through an academical course in the College of Glasgow. He followed his cousin Robert Boyd to France, where he studied under him for a time, and was afterwards appointed Regent in the College of Saumur. He also held in France a pastoral charge for about three years, but in consequence of a strong current of opposition to Protestantism setting in Boyd was compelled to return to Scotland, where he lived for a time under the protecting wing of Sir Wm. Scott of Elie and that of the Marquis of Hamilton. In 1623 he

was ordained minister of the Barony Parish, Glasgow, and was three times appointed Rector of the University there. On a certain Sunday, when preaching in the Cathedral, Oliver Cromwell and a party of soldiers entered to worship. Boyd fearlessly denounced the Cromwellian policy, and one of the party asked leave of his leader to silence the preacher with his musket, but Cromwell interposed, and at the close of the service invited Boyd to dine with him in the evening. When Boyd died in 1653 he left a handsome sum to Glasgow College funds, in remembrance of which gift his bust was set up over the entrance gateway of the old College. His poems, written in the Latin tongue, are now looked upon as literary curiosities. A manuscript entitled "Zion's Flowers" is popularly known as Zachary Boyd's Bible.



REV. ROBERT BLAIR.

This celebrated divine was a cadet of the ancient family of Blair of that Ilk, from which family was descended also his illustrious namesake, Robert Blair, author of "The Grave," in whom the poetical genius of the family reached its culminating point. Robert Blair lived in the stormy days of "The Covenant," a period when courage, prayerfulness, and self-denial were severely put to the test in the case of all who engaged in the turmoils of the time.

"In daily toil, in deadly fight, God's chosen find their time to pray:
And still He loves the brave and strong
Who scorn to sleep, and strive with wrong,
To mend it if they may."

Mr Blair proved himself a brave and strong advocate for the cause which he strove to maintain and entered energetically into all the embroilments of public life. He was present with the Scots army at Marston Moor, and was one of the Commissioners deputed to visit King Charles at Newcastle with the view of reconciling the fidgety monarch to Presbyterian Church government and to the Covenant. The mission was not altogether a fruitless one, as the King was so pleased with Mr Blair's prudent remarks that he appointed him his Chaplain for Scotland and sent the deputation home with at least many fair promises. Mr Blair was a proficient Latinist, and his poetical compositions are nearly all written in the Latin tongue, and are therefore as a sealed book to all but learned antiquaries.

SIR WILLIAM MURE.

Sir William Mure, the poet and historian of the Rowallan family, succeeded to his father's estates in 1639. He is the author of "The Historie and Descent of the House of Rowallan," and was born at Rowallan Castle, near Kilmarnock. In the family history above alluded to the author modestly says of himself:—"This Sir William was pious and learned, and had an excellent vein in poesie, he delyted much in building and planting, he builded the new wark on the north syde of the close, and the battlement of the back wall, and reformed the whole house exceedingly." Mure seems to have devoted a considerable portion of his time to literary exercises, and early in life wrote some Latin verses on the death of his grandfather. His mother was a sister of Alexander Montgomerie, author of "The Cherry and the Slae," and in one of his pieces Sir William Mure thus eulogizes the writings of his kinsman:—

Matchless Montgomerie in his native tongue
 In former times to that great Sire hath sung;
 And often ravished his harmonious ear
 With strains fit only for a Prince to hear.
 My muse which nought doth challenge worthy fame—
 Save from Montgomerie she her birth doth claim;
 Although his Phœnix ashes have sent forth
 Pan for Apollo, if compared in worth—
 Pretendeth little to supply his place,
 By right heriditar to serve thy grace.

Sir William took an active interest in the political movements of his time, and was a member of the Parliament held at Edinburgh in 1643 for the ratification of the "Solemn League and Covenant." He was appointed also, in 1644, one of the Committee of War, for the Sherifdom of Ayr, and was on this same year present at the siege of Newcastle, where he received a slight wound with the butt of a musket. Being in sympathy with the Covenanters, he was able on several occasions to protect his tenantry from the tyranny of the ruthless troopers, without coming under the ban of the Government. His son and successor was less lucky, and for this same cause suffered imprisonment on more than one occasion.



WILLIAM HAMILTON of Gilbertfield.

The ancestors of this poet were a branch of the ducal family of Hamilton, and owned the lands of Ardoch, near Kilwinning, from an early period. About the middle of the seventeenth

century Captain William Hamilton, father of the poet, acquired the property of Ladyland, near Kilwinning, and shortly afterwards built a new mansion-house to replace the old castle of Ladyland, which he demolished.

The poet was the youngest of Captain Hamilton's two sons. He joined the army in early manhood and served many years abroad, attaining to the rank of Lieutenant in Lord Hyndford's Regiment. As Apollo of the Delian Vale was lord alike of the lyre and bow, so Hamilton of Ladyland was lord alike of the lyre and broad-sword. On retiring from the army on half-pay he took up residence at Gilbertfield, in the parish of Cambuslang. Hence he is usually styled Hamilton of Gilbertfield in contradistinction to Hamilton of Bangour, who was a contemporary poet, and a scion also, of a distinguished Ayrshire family. In his retirement the poet had ample leisure to pursue his literary studies. With Allan Ramsay, author of "The Gentle Shepherd," he opened a poetical correspondence. Three of his epistles, written in 1719, were published in certain editions of Ramsay's works, and are highly creditable to Hamilton's skill as a poet. Towards the close of his life he removed from Gilbertfield to Latterick, in Lanarkshire, where he died in 1751. Hamilton was one of the "ingenious young gentlemen" who contributed pieces to Ramsay's "Tea Table Miscellany." In 1722 he published a modernized version of Blind Harry's "Wallace," which was the only version of the blind minstrel's lay known to the poet Burns. As already stated, William Hamilton of Bangour, author of "The Braes of Yarrow," was of Ayrshire descent, but as it is conjectured that he was born in Linlithgowshire, the anthologist of that county has given him a questionable place in his work on the poets of Linlithgow.

Allan Ramsay held Hamilton of Gilbertfield's poetical talents in high esteem, and admits being aroused to poetical emotion and emulation by reading a poem written by his friend on the death of "Bonnie Heck," a famous Fifeshire greyhound:—

"When I begoud first to cun verse
And could your "Andry Whins" rehearse,
Where bonnie Heck ran fast and fierce,
It warmed my breist;
Then emulation did me pierce
Whilk since ne'er ceased."

WILLIE WAS A WANTON WAG.

Hamilton of Gilbertfield is the reputed author of "Willie was a Wanton Wag." Stenhouse attributes the authorship to

William Walkinshaw, of that ilk, near Paisley, but as the balance of opinion seems to be in favour of Hamilton being the author we make no apology for introducing the old favourite to our readers:—

O, Willie was a wanton lad,
The blythest lad the e'er I saw;
At bridals still he bore the brag,
And carried aye the gree awa':
His doublet was o' Zetland shag,
And vow! but Willie he was braw;
And at his shouther hung a tag,
That pleased the lasses best o' a'.

He was a man without a clag,
His heart was frank, without a flaw;
And aye whatever Willie said
It still was halden as a law.
His boots they were made o' the jag;
When he gaed to the weapon-shaw,
Upon the green nane durst him brag,
The fient a ane among them a'.

And wasna Willie weel worth gowd,
He wan the love o' great and sma';
For after he the bride had kiss'd,
He kiss'd the lasses halesale a'!
Sae merrily round the ring they row'd,
When by the hand he led them a';
And smack on smack on them bestow'd
By virtue o' a standin' law.

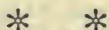
And wasna Willie a great loon,
As slyre a lick as e'er was seen;
When he danced wi' the lasses roun',
The bridegroom spiered where he had been.
Quoth Willie, I've been at the ring,
Wi' bobbin'; faith my shanks are sair,
Gae ca' your bride and maidens in,
For Willie he dow do nae mair.

Then rest ye, Willie, I'll gae out,
And for a wee fill up the ring;
But shame light on his supple snout,
He wanted Willie's wanton fling.
Then straight he to the bride did fare,
Says, Weel's me on your bonnie face;
Wi' bobbin Willie's shanks are sair,
And I'm come out to fill his place.

Bridegroom, says she, you'll spoil the dance,
And at the ring you'll aye be lag
Unless like Willie you advance
(O Willie has a wanton leg),
For wi't he learns us a' to steer,
And foremost aye bears up the ring:
We will find nae sic dancing here
If we want Willie's wanton fling.

ANDREW MICHAEL RAMSAY.

The literary labours of Andrew Michael Ramsay, who essayed to climb the Parnassian uplands near the close of his life, were devoted chiefly to prose works. He is known as the Chevalier de Ramsay—a title bestowed upon him during a prolonged stay in France. He was born at Ayr, and trained at the Universities of Edinburgh and St. Andrews. In his twenty-third year he proceeded to Leyden, where he completed his studies, and afterwards to Cambray, in France, where he visited the celebrated Fênelon, who received him into his house as an inmate of his family, and appointed him his secretary. Through the influence of Fênelon he ultimately procured the preceptorship to the Duke de Chateau Thierry and the Prince de Turenne. From Paris he removed to Rome in 1724 in order to fulfil the appointment of tutor to Prince Charles Edward Stuart and his brother Henry. The Chevalier amassed a handsome fortune in this way, and on returning to his native country it is said that he offered to settle an annuity on certain of his relatives, who refused his gift on the grounds that he had renounced the Protestant faith and embraced the Catholic when in the family of Fênelon.

**ROBERT CRAUFURD.**

It may come as a surprise to students of ancient minstrelsy to find the name of Robert Craufurd, author of "Tweedside" and "The Bush aboon Traquair," among the poets of Ayrshire. Although he has already been claimed by Motherwell, and that on the most slender grounds, as a Renfrewshire bard, the evidence in favour of his Ayrshire nativity is so strong that it seems strange how Motherwell's claim has seldom been disputed.

Craufurd was a cadet of the house of Auchenames, but it is known that at an early period the Craufurds of Auchenames settled at Crosbie Tower, near Troon, then in the parish of Dundonald, and the probability is that Crosbie, which is now better known as Fullarton, may be the birthplace of the poet. According to some accounts his mother was a daughter of Gordon of Turnberry. If this be correct, he was linked to Ayrshire by a double tie, and should never have found a place among the poets of Renfrewshire. His birth took place in 1690, and he met his death by drowning while returning from France in 1733. He was a contemporary of William Hamilton of Gilbertfield, and both contributed meritorious pieces to

Allan Ramsay's "Tea Table Miscellany." Craufurd's poems are distinguished by an easy flow of rhythm and by a grace and refinement of language which marks them as the very essence of lyrical composition. Lord Woodhouselee gave it as his opinion that we have nothing more perfect in that species of composition than "Tweedside" and one or two other of Craufurd's lyrical gems.

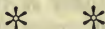
TWEEDSIDE.

What beauties does Flora disclose!
 How sweet are her smiles upon Tweed!
 Yet Mary's still sweeter than those,
 Both nature and fancy exceed.
 Nor daisy nor sweet-blushing rose,
 Not all the gay flowers of the field,
 Not Tweed gliding gently through those,
 Such beauty and pleasure does yield.

The warblers are heard in the grove,
 The linnet, the lark, and the thrush,
 The blackbird and sweet-cooing dove,
 With music enchant every bush.
 Come, let us go forth to the mead,
 Let us see how the primroses spring;
 We'll lodge in some village on Tweed,
 And love while the feather'd folks sing.

How does my love pass the long day?
 Does Mary not tend a few sheep?
 Do THEY never carelessly stray,
 While happily SHE lies asleep?
 Should Tweed's murmurs lull her to rest,
 Kind nature indulging my bliss,
 To relieve the soft pains of my breast,
 I'd steal an ambrosial kiss.

'Tis she does the virgins excel,
 No beauty with her may compare;
 Love's graces all round her do dwell,
 She's fairest where thousands are fair.
 Say, charmer, where do thy flocks stray?
 Oh! tell me at noon where they feed?
 Shall I seek them on sweet winding Tay
 Or the pleasanter banks of the Tweed?



WILLIAM WALLACE of Cairnhill.

The Wallaces of Cairnhill, in the parish of Craigie, claim descent from Scotland's hero of that surname.

William Wallace, the poet of the Cairnhill family, was admitted a member of the Faculty of Advocates in 1734, and suc-

ceeded to the Cairnhill estates in 1748. But few specimens of his poetical writings are extant. His talents lay in the direction of lyrical composition, and his best known piece, entitled "Strephon and Lydia," appeared first in "Johnson's Musical Museum." The poem is founded on the adventures of a youth known in his day as Beau Gibson, who fell in love with a lady of distinction, and their attachment being looked on unfavourably "Strephon" was sent abroad, with a commission, and perished in Admiral Vernon's expedition to Carthage.

STREPHON AND LYDIA.

All lovely on the sultry beach
 Expiring Strephon lay;
 No hand the cordial draught to reach,
 Nor cheer the gloomy way.
 Ill-fatéd youth! no parent nigh
 To catch thy fleeting breath;
 No bride to fix thy swimming eye
 Or smoothe the face of death.

Far distant from the mournful scene
 Thy parents sit at ease;
 Thy Lydia rifles all the plain,
 And all the Spring, to please.
 Ill-fated youth! by fault of friend,
 Not force of foe depressed;
 Thou fall'st alas! thyself, thy kind,
 Thy country, unredressed.

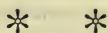
In 1760 an edition of poems by Hamilton of Bangour was published, and in it there appeared a parody, written, it is conjectured, by the bard of Cairnhill, who appears to have been on friendly terms with Hamilton. The "Gentle Jean" of this parody is supposed to be one with the Lydia of the preceding poem, but the identity of the pious-eyed Betty has not been conjectured. That the two ladies were rival society belles may be inferred from the opening lines of the parody:—

Two toasts at every public place are seen—
 God-like Elizabeth, and gentle Jean:
 Mild Jeanie smiles at every word you say,
 Seems pleased herself, and sends you pleased away.
 Her face so wondrous fair, so soft her hands,
 We're tempted oft to think she understands;
 Each fop with joy the kind endeavour sees,
 And thinks himself the beau she cares to please;
 But the sly nymph has motives of her own,
 Her lips are opened, and—her teeth are shown.

Bess blunders out with everything aloud,
 And rattles unwithheld and unwithstood:
 In vain the sighing swain implores a truce,
 Nor can his wit one moment's pause produce;
 She bounds o'er all, and, conscious of her force,
 Still pours along the torrent of discourse.
 Sometimes, 'tis true, just as her breath she draws,
 With watchful eye we catch one moment's pause,
 But when that instantaneous moment's o'er,
 She rattles on incessant as before.

To which of these two wonders of the town,
 Say, shall I trust, to spend an afternoon?
 If Betty's drawing-room should be my choice,
 Intoxicate with wit, struck down with noise,
 Pleas'd and displeas'd, I quit the Bedlam scene,
 And joyful hail my peace of mind again:

But if to gentle Jeanie's I repair,
 Regaled on syllabub, and fed on air,
 With studied rapture, yawning I commend,
 Mov'd by no cause, directed to no end,
 Till half asleep, though flatter'd, not content,
 I come away as joyless as I went.



JOHN LAPRAIK.

John Lapraik, contemporary and correspondent of Robert Burns, was born at Laigh Dalfram, in the parish of Muirkirk. He was a person of considerable means, until becoming involved in the wreck of the Ayr Bank, which was termed by Burns "a villainous bubble," he was rendered insolvent, and subsequently had to endure the miseries of a debtor's prison.

The following poem is one of Lapraik's best efforts, and he informed Burns that it was composed one day when his wife was fretting over their misfortunes:—

When I upon thy bosom lean,
 Enraptured I do call thee mine;
 I glory in those sacred ties
 That made us one, who once were twain;
 A mutual flame inspires us both—
 The tender look, the melting kiss;
 Even years shall ne'er destroy our love
 But only gi'e us change o' bliss.

Have I a wish? 'Tis all for thee;
 I know thy wish is me to please;
 Our moments pass so smooth away,
 That numbers on us look and gaze,

Well pleased to see our happy days,
 Nor envy's sel finds aught to blame,
 And ay when weary cares arise
 Thy bosom still shall be my hame.

I'll lay me there and take my rest;
 And if that ought disturb my fair,
 I'll bid her laugh her cares away,
 And beg her not to drop a tear.
 Have I a joy? 'tis all her own;
 United still her heart and mine;
 They're like the woodbine round the tree,
 That's twined till death shall them disjoin.

When the above song became known locally it was frequently sung at country-rockings, and Robert Burns hearing it warbled one night addressed a letter on the following day to the author:—

“On fastin' e'en we had a rockin',
 To ca' the crack and weave our stockin',
 An' there was muckle fun and jokin',
 Ye needna doubt;
 At length we had a hearty yokin'
 At sang about.

There was ae sang among the rest,
 Aboon them a' that pleased me best,
 That some kind husband had address
 To some sweet wife;
 It thirl'd the heart strings through the breast
 A' to the life.”

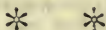
The intimacy that sprung up in this way between Burns and Lapraik brought the two poets together, their first meeting being in Mauchline, where they gave

Ae nicht's discharge to care,
 And had a swap o' rhymin' ware
 Wi' ane anither.

Burns afterwards visited Lapraik at Muirsmill, where he dined, spent a merry evening, and next morning took his departure for Mossgiel. These meetings, together with the success of Burns's Kilmarnock volume, doubtless had a good deal to do with stimulating Lapraik to continue writing verse; indeed he professes that it never occurred to him to trouble the world with his “dull, insipid, thowless rhyme.”

Till Burns's muse, wi' friendly blast,
 First tooted up his fame,
 And sounded loud through a' the wast,
 His lang forgotten name.

Strangely enough, of all his letters to the Mossgiel bard only one finds a place in his volume of poems. With the exception of the song already quoted, few of Lapraik's poems display any approach to poetic merit. The closing years of his life were spent in Muirkirk, where he followed the twofold calling of publican and postmaster.



ROBERT BOSWELL.

Robert Boswell, of Auchinleck, was a cousin-german of James Boswell, the biographer, and was born at Auchinleck in the same year as his renowned cousin. He was a Writer to the Signet, and with him and his illustrious kinsman begin the literary traditions of this distinguished Ayrshire family. Robert Boswell was eminently pious, and his poetical talents he devoted to the composing of hymns, many of which were popular in his day and generation. His literary gifts have been inherited by his great-grand-daughter, Miss Charlotte Maria Tucker, well known by her writings under the *nom de plume* of A. L. O. E.



ISOBEL PAGAN.

Isobel Pagan is remembered as the authoress of the sweet pastoral lyric, "Ca' the yowes to the knowes." She was born about four miles from Nith-head, in the parish of New Cumnock, where she lived till about fourteen years of age. Being lame from infancy, she was unfitted for laborious work of any kind; and passed the greater part of her life in a cottage romantically situated on the banks of the Garpel Water. She did not live as a recluse, but was at all times ready to receive visitors, who frequently spent their evenings there singing and carousing, making her house the favourite "howff" of all the wits and drouthy neighbours in the district. Isobel joined in the mirth with the greatest relish, and was neither averse nor shy to sing a song or taste a wee drop of usquebagh. Her own lines are emphatic enough on this point:—

"When I see merry companie,
I sing a song with mirth and glee,
And sometimes I the whisky pree,
But 'deed it's best to let it be.

A' my faults I will not tell.
 I scarcely ken them a' mysel';
 I've come thro' various scenes o' life,
 Yet never was a married wife."

Isobel's chief mode of existence was stringing rhymes together and singing them to her votaries. That her vocalism did credit to the professional platform is beyond doubt, for on one occasion she wrested the palm from a professional singer belonging to a theatrical party in Ayr by her superior rendering of "The Humours of Glen." A small volume of her poems was published, to which additional interest was given by the insertion of a poem, entitled "The Laird o' Glenlee," from the pen of James Boswell, the famous biographer.

"Tibbie"—as she was called by familiar friends—was accustomed to sing this song frequently to the unbounded delight of her rustic audiences.

She died towards the end of 1821, in the 80th year of her age, and her remains were interred in the churchyard of Muirkirk, where a tombstone was erected over her grave. Burns composed a new version of her popular song, retaining the original chorus. It begins:—

"Hark the mavis' evening sang,
 Sounding Clouden's woods amang!
 Then a faulding let us gang,
 My bonnie dearie."

Isobel Pagan's finest contribution to Scottish minstrelsy possesses the true lyrical feeling, and is worthy of perpetuation:—

Ca' the yowes to the knowes,
 Ca' them where the heather grows,
 Ca' them where the burnie rows,
 My bonnie dearie.

As I gaed down the water side
 There I met my shepherd lad;
 He row'd me sweetly in his plaid,
 An' he ca'd me his dearie.

Will ye gang down the water side
 An' see the waves sae sweetly glide
 Beneath the hazels spreading wide?
 The moon it shines fu' clearly.

Ye shall get gowns and ribbons meet,
 Cauf-leather shoon to thy white feet;
 And in my arms yese lie and sleep,
 An' ye shall be my dearie.

If ye'll but stand to what ye've said,
 Ise gang wi' you my shepherd lad,
 And ye may row me in your plaid,
 An' I shall be your dearie.

While water wimples to the sea,
 While day blinks in the lift sae hie,
 Till clay-cauld death shall blin' my e'e,
 Ye shall be my dearie.

Another song of Miss Pagan's which merits attention, but which did not appear in her volume, is:—

THE CROOK AND PLAID.

Ilk lassie has a laddie she lo'es aboon the rest,
 Ilk lassie has a laddie, if she likes to confess't,
 That is dear unto her bosom whatever be his trade;
 But my lover's aye the laddie that wears the crook and plaid.

Ilk morn he climbs the mountains, his fleecy flocks to view,
 And hears the lav'rocks chanting, new sprung frae mang the dew:
 His bonnie wee bit doggie, sae frolicsome and glad,
 Runs aye before the laddie that wears the crook and plaid.

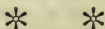
And when that he is wearied, and lies upon the grass,
 What if that in his plaidie he hide a bonnie lass?
 No doubt there's a preference due to every trade,
 But commend to me the laddie that wears the crook and plaid.

And when in summer weather he is upon the hill,
 He reads in books of history that learns him meikle skill:
 There's nae sic joyous leisure to be had at ony trade,
 Save that the laddie follows that wears the crook and plaid.

What though in storms o' winter part o' his flock should die,
 My laddie aye is cheery, and why then should not I?
 The prospect o' the summer can surely mak' us glad;
 Contented lives the laddie that wears the crook and plaid.

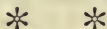
King David was a shepherd while in the prime o' youth,
 And following the fleecy flocks he pondered upon truth;
 And when he came to be a king, and left his former trade,
 'Twas an honour to the laddie that wears the crook and plaid.

This song should not be confounded with a Scottish lyric by Henry Scott Riddell bearing the same title and sung to the same melody.



JAMES MUIRHEAD, D.D.

James Muirhead was a native of Logan, in the parish of Cumnock. He studied for the ministry, and was ordained minister of the parish of Urr in 1770. He was a scholar of great and varied talents, and was in many ways a remarkable person, being a mathematician and naturalist, as well as a poet of considerable reputation. Dr Muirhead was a makar of auld Scots songs, one of his contributions to the Scottish lyre being the once popular song, "Bess the Gawkie."



JEAN GLOVER.

Jean Glover is remembered as the authoress of the once popular song, "O'er the moor among the heather," which the Bard of Alloway, according to his own account, "took down from her singing as she was strolling through the country with a sleight-of-hand blackguard." Burns threw some aspersions on Jean Glover's character, which it would be unfair to repeat. Her father was a respectable weaver in Kilmarnock, who gave his family such education as he could afford. Jean appears to have inherited an unsettled and rather wayward disposition, for early in life she threw in her lot with a party of strolling players, adopted the stage as a profession, and finally eloped with one of the heroes of the sock and buskin. With the companion of her choice, whose name was Richard, she toured the country, giving historic displays, and as she was a person of remarkable address and beauty, it may be assumed that she commanded favourable attention wherever she went. That she was an exceedingly handsome person is vouched for by the testimony of an old woman who remembered having seen her at a fair in Irvine, gaily attired, and playing on a tambourine at the mouth of a close, in which was the exhibition-room of her husband, the conjurer. "Weel do I remember her," said the old woman to an inquirer, "and thocht her the brawest leddy I had ever seen step in leather shoon." Added to her beauty she had the gift of a fine voice, and rendered Scottish songs in good style, her rendering of "Green grow the rashes" being considered as amongst her finest vocal efforts. She died at Letterkenny, in Ireland, when about 43 years of age, and had been performing on the stage up till within about two months of her death.

The only song known to have been composed by her was communicated by Burns to "Johnson's Scots Musical Museum."

O'ER THE MOOR AMANG THE HEATHER.

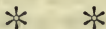
Comin' thro' the Craigs o' Kyle,
 Amang the bonnie blooming heather,
 There I met a bonnie lassie
 Keeping a' her yowes thegither.
 O'er the moor, amang the heather,
 O'er the moor, amang the heather,
 There I met a bonnie lassie
 Keeping a' her yowes thegither.

Says I, my dearie, where's thy hame,
 In moor or dale, pray tell me whether?
 She says, I tent the fleecy flocks
 That feed amang the blooming heather.
 O'er the moor, etc.

We laid us down upon a bank,
 Sae warm and sunny was the weather;
 She left her flocks at large to rove
 Amang the bonnie blooming heather.
 O'er the moor, etc.

While thus we lay she sang a sang,
 Till echo ran a mile and further,
 And aye the burden o' the sang
 Was—O'er the moor amang the heather.
 O'er the moor, etc.

She charmed my heart, and aye sin' syne
 I couldna think on aye ither;
 By sea and sky she shall be mine,
 The bonnie lass amang the heather.
 O'er the moor amang the heather,
 O'er the moor amang the heather,
 There I met a bonnie lassie
 Keeping a' her yowes thegither.



WILLIAM SIMSON.

With this poet we close our record of the most important of the early bards of Ayrshire, born between the year 1315 and that preceding the birth of Robert Burns.

William Simson was the eldest son of a farmer in the vicinity of Ochiltree, and was educated for the Church, but at an early age turned his attention to "teaching the young idea how to shoot."

He wrote pieces of very passable merit, but was possessed of a natural shyness and a diffidence which would not permit him to sanction the publication of any of his musings. He knew

that fame and publicity bring perils unknown and undreamt of in the seclusion of obscurity—

“Most rocks the pine that soars afar,
When leaves are tempest whirled;
Direst the crash when turrets are
In dusty ruin hurled;
The thunder lovest best to scar
The bright brows of the world.”

and no amount of entreaties could persuade him to publish his poems. He was brought into notice, however, through an epistolary correspondence with Robert Burns, who styled him “Winsome Willie.” The two poets, together with James Tennant of Glenconner, were wont to have frequent meetings in the inn at Ochiltree, when wit sparkled more brightly than the village ale, and the satire was sometimes equally bitter.

In course of time Simson was called away from Ochiltree to take charge of the parish school of Old Cumnock. He lived nineteen years after the death of his great contemporary, and was buried in Cumnock Churchyard, where a gravestone was erected to his memory, bearing the following lines from the pen of Mr A. B. Todd, the veteran poet and journalist:—

Here Winsome Willie lies, whose worth
In Burns woke equal love,
And death which wrenched the ties on earth
Has knit them now above.

The following specimen of Simson’s poetic vein appears in Paterson’s “Contemporaries of Burns.” It is addressed to

TOM WALKER IN AFFLICTION.

In sympathy your servant, Will,
Begs leave to occupy his quill,
Inquiring how ye fen’;
Since trouble haunts your little ha’,
Nae doubt ye’re heartless ane and a’:
Nevertheless I ken
Ye’re nae sae very scant o’ grace,
Whate’er the dispensation
As e’re set up your squintin’ face
An’ fret at tribulation.
No, no, Tam, ye know Tam,
Whate’er’s our present plaint,
Sin brocht it nor ocht it
To raise our discontent.

Though life’s a pilgrimage, you know,
Thick interspersed wi’ weal and woe;
For we’re sic feeble creatures;

Prosperity we downa thole,
 Adversity is on the whole
 Repugnant to our natures.
 The first sae feeds inherent pride,
 We clean misken oursel';
 The last's a dark, black rolling tide,
 Whose origin is hell.
 Kind heaven has given
 A life devoid of neither,
 But mix'd them, and fix'd them,
 In human life together.

Then why should creatures such as we
 Presume to fret at heaven's decree,
 Because on poortith's brink:
 Sure whether we are great or rich,
 Or mean or poor, it mak's na much,
 This life is but a blink;
 Swift are our days, as shuttles fly,
 Impatient of control,
 Till some auld sexton by and by
 Maun hide us in a hole.
 Earth's treasures, life's pleasures,
 Will then avail us little.
 Scots rhyme then, though prime then,
 Will no be worth a spittle.

What signifies the world's applause,
 Its giddy shouts and loud huzzas?
 What tho' the vulgar throng,
 And round our temples bind the bays,
 For youth-corrupting fulsome lays,
 If virtue calls them wrong?
 One hour of conscious innocence
 Yields much more real bliss
 Than years of pleasure at expense
 Of inward happiness.
 Now, therefore, Tom, wherefore
 Should bards devote their skill
 Inditing and writing
 Rhymes bordering on ill.

Hence I'll abjure the fabled Nine,
 And graciously His aid divine
 I humbly will implore
 Who taught old David, Israel's King,
 In heavenly strains to play and sing
 Jehovah to adore;
 Who brought him up from tending sheep,
 His early occupation,
 And set him on his throne to keep
 Watch o'er his elect nation.
 Attend me, defend me,
 Thou Being all divine:
 Inspire me, and fire me,
 With sentiments sublime.

BOOK II.

LATER AND MODERN POETS OF
AYRSHIRE.

PART I.

THE POETS OF KYLE FROM ROBERT BURNS
TILL THE PRESENT DAY.

Book II.

Learn and Master Force of
Argument.

Part I.

The Force of Reason and Logic
and the Power of the Mind.

ROBERT BURNS.

The life-story of Robert Burns is now so widely known that it may be considered common household property. Monuments to his memory have been erected in every land where the British language is spoken. Alloway Cottage (his birthplace), Mauchline, Ellisland, and Dumfries (the scenes of his early and later years), are the shrines to which pilgrims from all corners of the world repair in ever-increasing numbers to pay their respects to the memory of the greatest poetical genius Scotland has yet produced.

The son of a toil-worn, earnest, plodding, and penury-stricken, farmer, he became inured at an early age to the hardships and struggles of farm life. His school education comprised a fairly extensive knowledge of English reading, writing, and arithmetic, to which was added a nodding acquaintance with mathematics and the French language, and rustic employment being not unfavourable to self-tuition, he was able on this groundwork to build a goodly structure of knowledge and learning which proved useful to him in after life.

After following the fortunes of his father from Alloway to Mount Oliphant, and thence to Lochlea, near Tarbolton, he at length settled (after the death of his father in Lochlea) in the farm of Mossgiel, near Mauchline, a leasehold of which was granted to the poet and his brother Gilbert. While in Mossgiel he composed the greater number of his poems which appeared in the first Kilmarnock edition of his works, for his mind was ever haunted by mysterious "stirrings of ambition," which he describes as "the blind gropings of Homer's Cyclops round the walls of his cave." At this period literary prosperity burst upon him like a meteoric flash and brightened all his prospects, which were, however, speedily quenched, through certain misdoings of his own. Love, hope, grief, disappointment, and despair alternately swayed his supersensitive mind, as if the Fates had made of him a human shuttlecock to be played with at the bidding of their own capricious whims. But the fire of his genius could not be quenched, nor the ardour of his passionate nature abated.

With Robert Burns love and poesy went hand in hand, and one flame after another burned in his bosom, fermented in his brain, and scintillated in songs the purest and tenderest ever conceived. His genius was too broad and strong, however, to be confined to one channel, and his fame rests secure not only in his incomparable lyrics, but in such masterpieces as "Tam

o' Shanter," "Death and Dr Hornbook," "Ode to a Mouse," and many others of equal merit.

The farm did not prosper, and, love complications ensuing, the poet determined to emigrate to Jamaica. To raise means for his passage he was advised to publish a subscription volume of his poems. The first Kilmarnock Edition was the result. It proved successful beyond all expectation, and Burns was prompted to proceed to Edinburgh and superintend the publishing of a second edition. Thenceforth he abandoned all idea of emigrating, and in place of setting sail for the West Indies he journeyed on horseback from Mossgiel eastward to Edinburgh. In the capital he was borne along on the breeze of popularity, being received with open arms, admired, flattered, and lionized by all ranks and classes. He prolonged his stay in Edinburgh till his second edition was published. It realized the handsome profit of £500, part of which sum the poet advanced to his brother Gilbert, and with the remainder took a lease of Ellisland farm, in Dumfriesshire. While in Mossgiel he had contracted a clandestine marriage with Jean Armour, but the union found no favour in the eyes of Jean's father, who destroyed the marriage lines. After his famous reception in Edinburgh his father-in-law relented, and extended to the once despised poet the hand of friendship. A re-union between his daughter and Burns was effected, and in due time he had the gratification of installing his "Bonnie Jean" as mistress of Ellisland.

The sun of fortune now burst in glorious splendour on the head of our poet, but it was only a fitful and momentary gleam between the storms. Fearing the probability of being unable to maintain himself in the farm, he applied for an appointment in the Excise, and subsequently procured the office of exciseman in the district where he resided. It soon became clear that he could not attend to the duties of the farm and to his excise work at the same time, and after a trial of about three years and a-half he was forced to abandon the farm and fall back on the excise. He now removed to the town of Dumfries, and on a salary of £70 per annum contrived to maintain himself and those dependent upon him, and with a mind free from the worries of a farm he settled down to the congenial task of collecting songs and tunes for his friend and correspondent, George Thomson, of Edinburgh. It then appeared that a long life of usefulness was yet before him, but not many years elapsed till the shadow of disease overcast his prospects, and his health slowly but surely declining he gave his last "good night" to the world on the twenty-first of July, 1796.

Robert Burns was the embodiment of native chivalry, and nothing of human interest was beneath his notice. His letters

are as remarkable as his poetical effusions, and are marked by the same fervid passion and spontaneous humour. His songs are matchless in their sparkling purity and simplicity. He is in short—

“The bard of every age and clime,
Of genius fruitful and of soul sublime,
Who from the flowing mint of fancy pours
No spurious metal fused from common ores,
But gold to matchless purity refined,
And stamped with all the majesty of mind.”

TO A MOUSE,

On turning her up in her nest with the plough, November, 1785.

Wee sleekit, cowran, tim'rous beastie,
O, what a panic's in thy breastie!
Thou needna start awa' sae hasty
Wi' bickering brattle;¹
I wad be laith to rin an' chase thee
Wi' murd'ring pattle.²

I'm truly sorry man's dominion
Has broken Nature's social union
An' justifies that ill opinion
Which makes thee startle
At me, thy poor, earth-born companion,
An' fellow mortal!

I doubtna, whyles but thou may thieve,
What then? poor beastie, thou maun live!
A daimen-icker in a thrave³
'S a sma' request:
I'll get a blessin' wi' the lave,
An' never miss't!

Thy wee bit housie, too, in ruin;
Its silly wa's the winds are strewin!
An' naething, now, to big a new ane
O' foggage green;
An' bleak December's winds ensuin'
Baith snell an' keen!

Thou saw the fields laid bare an' waste,
An' weary winter comin' fast,
An' cosy here, aneath the blast,
Thou thought to dwell,
Till crash! the cruel coulter past
Out through thy cell.

That wee bit heap o' leaves an' stibble,
Has cost thee mony a weary nibble;
Now thou's turn'd out for a' thy trouble,
But⁴ house or hald,
To thole the winter's sleety dribble
An' cranreuch cauld!⁵

But Mousie, thou art no thy lane,
 In proving foresight may be vain;
 The best laid schemes o' mice an' men
 Gang aft agley,⁶
 An' lea' us nought but grief an' pain
 For promis'd joy!

Still thou art blest compar'd wi' me!
 The present only toucheth thee;
 But och! I backward cast my e'e
 On prospects drear!
 An' forward, tho' I canna see,
 I guess an' fear.

1 Short, hurried race. 2 Pattle or pettle—ploughstaff. 3 An ear of corn now and then. 4 Without house or holding. 5 Cold hoar-frost. 6 Wide of the aim.

ADDRESS TO THE UNCO GUID, OR THE RIGIDLY RIGHTEOUS.

My Son, these maxims make a rule,
 And lump them ay thegither;
 The rigid righteous is a fool,
 The rigid wise anither;
 The cleanest corn that e'er was dight¹
 May hae some pyles o' caff in;
 So ne'er a fellow-creature slight
 For random fits o' daffin'.
 Solomon, Eccles, ch. vii. verse 16.

O ye wha are sae guid yoursel',
 Sae pious and sae holy,
 Ye've nought to do but mark and tell
 Your neebor's fauts and folly!
 Whase life is like a weel-gaun mill,
 Supply'd wi' store o' water:
 The heap'd happier's ebbing still,
 And still the clap plays clatter.

Hear me, ye venerable Core,
 As counsel for poor mortals,
 That frequent pass dounce Wisdom's door
 For glaikit² Folly's portals;
 I, for their thoughtless, careless sakes
 Would here propone defences,
 Their donsie³ tricks, their black mistakes,
 Their failings and mischances.

Ye see your state wi' theirs compar'd,
 And shudder at the niffer,⁴
 But cast a moment's fair regard
 What mak's the mighty differ;
 Discount what scant occasion gave—
 That purity ye pride in—
 And (what's aft mair than a' the lave)⁵
 Your better art o' hiding.

Think, when your castigated pulse
 Gi'es now and then a wallop,
 What ragings must his veins convulse,
 That still eternal gallop:
 Wi' wind and tide fair i' your tail,
 Right on ye scud your sea-way;
 But in the teeth o' baith to sail,
 It makes an unco⁶ leeway.

See social life and glee sit down,
 All joyous and unthinking,
 Till, quite transmugrify'd,⁷ they're grown
 Debauchery and drinking:
 O, would they stay to calculate
 Th' eternal consequences;
 Or your more dreaded hell to state,
 Damnation of expenses!

Ye high, exalted, virtuous dames,
 Tied up in godly laces,
 Before ye gi'e poor Frailty names,
 Suppose a change o' cases;
 A dear-lov'd lad, convenience snug,
 A treacherous inclination—
 But let me whisper in your lug,⁸
 Ye're aiblins⁹ nae temptation.

Then gently scan your brother Man,
 Still gentler sister Woman;
 Tho' they may gang a kennin wrang,¹⁰
 To step aside is human.
 One point must still be greatly dark,
 The moving why they do it!
 And just as lamely can ye mark,
 How far, perhaps, they rue it.

Who made the heart, 'tis He alone,
 Decidedly can try us;
 He knows each chord, its various tone,
 Each spring its various bias:
 Then at the balance let's be mute,
 We never can adjust it:
 What's done we partly may compute,
 But know not what's resisted.

1 Cleaned from chaff. 2 Inattentive. 3 Unlucky. 4 An exchange or barter.
 5 All the rest. 6 Prodigious. 7 Metamorphosed. 8 Ear. 9 Perhaps. 10 Go
 a little wrong—off the straight.

MARY MORISON.

O, Mary, at thy window be,
 It is the wish'd, the trysted hour;
 Those smiles and glances let me see,
 That mak' the miser's treasure poor:

How blythely wad I bide the stoure,
 A weary slave frae sun to sun,
 Could I the rich reward secure—
 The lovely Mary Morison!

Yestreen, when to the trembling string,
 The dance gaed thro' the lighted ha',
 To thee my fancy took its wing,
 I sat, but neither heard nor saw;
 Tho' this was fair, and that was braw,
 And yon the toast o' a' the toun,
 I sigh'd and said amang them a',
 Ye are na Mary Morison.

O Mary, can'st thou wreck his peace,
 Wha for thy sake wad gladly dee?
 Or can'st thou break that heart of his,
 Whase only faut is loving thee?
 If love for love thou wilt na gi'e,
 At least be pity to me shown;
 A thought ungentle canna be
 The thought o' Mary Morison.



DAVID SILLAR.

David Sillar, like his great contemporary Robert Burns, was country-born and country-bred, his father being a farmer in Spittleside, near Tarbolton. Sillar seems to have enjoyed an advantage over Burns in that he was not compelled by his father to the constant drudgery of farm work, which he speedily abandoned for the more congenial occupation of a school teacher.

After following this calling for a few years in the neighbourhood of Tarbolton he removed to Irvine, and there commenced business as a grocer. About this time he began to write verse, and, stimulated probably by the success of Burns, he ventured before the reading public with a book of poems dedicated to Hugh Montgomery, Esq. of Skelmorlie, afterwards Earl of Eglinton. His poems are not without merit, but whenever he attempted song-writing his muse dropped to earth like a winged pigeon.

In the accomplishment of violin playing, and in this only, was David Sillar a match for Robert Burns. He seems to have acquired a pretty fair execution on this instrument, and his fiddle was probably the soul and life of many a country "kirk" at which the great poet was present. Burns did not in after years forget those merry-makings, as shown in his poetical

epistle to his brother-poet and fellow-fiddler, of the Tarbolton period:—

Hale be your heart! hale be your fiddle!
 Lang may your elbuck jink an' diddle,
 To cheer you through the weary widdle
 O' war'ly cares:
 Till bairns' bairns kindly cuddle
 Your auld, grey hairs.

Sillar's grocery business in Irvine proved disastrous. His means vanished, and, getting into debt, a creditor to whom he owed the paltry sum of five pounds, had him imprisoned for a time in the old Tolbooth. On regaining his freedom he visited Edinburgh, but returned shortly to Irvine, and had recourse to his former profession of teacher. He ultimately fell heir to all his brother's money, and this windfall enabled him to start afresh in life. His remaining years were passed in comparative ease and competency. He served for a time as a member of Irvine Town Council, and in later life his company was much sought after on account of his early intimacy with Burns.

The following poem is one of his best efforts. It was addressed "to Coila's Bard," who responded with an effusion now known as his "Second Epistle to Davie":—

While Reekie's bards your muse commen',
 An' praise the numbers o' your pen,
 Accept this kindly frae a friend,
 Your Dainty Davie.
 Wha ace o' hearts does still remain,
 Ye may believe me.

I ne'er was muckle gi'en to praisin',
 Or else ye might be sure o' fraisin',
 For trouth, I think, in solid reason,
 Your kintra reed,
 Plays sweet as Robin Fergusson,
 Or his on Tweed.

Your Luath, Cæsar bites right sair;
 An' when ye paint the "Holy Fair",
 Ye draw it to a very hair,
 Or when ye turn
 An' sing the follies o' the fair
 How sweet ye mourn!

Let Coila's plains wi' me rejoice,
 And praise the worthy bard whose lays
 Their worth and beauty high doth raise
 To lasting fame;
 His works, his worth, will ever praise
 And crown his name.

Brave Ramsay now and Fergusson,
 Wha ha'e sae lang time filled the throne
 O' Poetry, may lay them down
 Quiet i' their urns,
 Since fame in justice gi'es the crown
 To Coila's Burns.

Hail, happy bard! ye're now confest
 The king o' singers i' the west;
 Edina hath the same exprest,
 Wi' joy they fin'
 That ye're, when tried by Nature's test,
 Gude sterling coin.

Sing on, my frien', your fame's secured,
 And still maintain the name o' bard;
 But yet tak' tent and keep a guard,
 For Envy's tryin'
 To blast your name, mair just reward
 For the envying.

But tho' the tout o' fame may please you,
 Letna the flatterin' ghaist o'erheeze you,
 Ne'er flyte nor fraise tae gar folk roose you,
 For men o' skill,
 When ye write weel, will always praise you
 Out o' gude will.

Great numbers on this earthly ba',
 As soon as death gi'es them the ca',
 Permitted are to slide awa',
 An' straight forgot—
 Forbid that ever this should fa'
 To be your lot.

I ever had an anxious wish,
 Forgive me, Heaven! if 'twas amiss,
 That Fame in life my name would bless,
 An' kindly save
 It from the cruel tyrant's crush
 Beyond the grave.

Tho' the fastest liver soonest dies,
 And length o' days should mak' us wise,
 Yet haste wi' speed, to glory rise,
 An' spur your horse:
 They're shortest aye wha gain the prize
 Upon the course.

Sae to conclude, auld frien' an' neebor,
 Your muse forgetna weel to feed her,
 Then steer through life wi' birr and vigour,
 To win a horn,
 Whase soun' shall reach ayont the Tiber
 'Mang ears unborn.

THOMAS WALKER.

Thomas Walker, the Ochiltree tailor, shines as a very small luminary in the constellation of Ayrshire poets, and that only by the reflected lights of "Rantin Robin" and "Winsome Willie." The tailor makes the man outwardly, and Thomas thought to reform Robert Burns inwardly, by sending him a didactic poetical epistle. As saith the comedian:—

"So poets can't the baize obtain
Unless their tailors choose,
While grooms and coachmen, not in vain,
Each evening seek the mews."

The poet has, however, obtained his bays independent of Thomas, the Ochiltree rhymmer, who was cajoled into addressing Burns by his waggish companion and fellow-villager Dominie Simson, who, as we have already seen, was also a poetical luminary but of a higher magnitude than Walker. The dominie effected his waggish purpose by sending Walker a poem, which begins in the following strain:—

Ye Muses! why leave ye Tom Walker so long?
His rhymes unconnected
Show he's disrespected
By you—ye inspirers of song—
For, to my vexation,
His versification is frequently wrong.
With aspect propitious ye smile upon Burns—
His versification
Gives strong indication
Ye're nae way averse to indelicate turns;
Or rather than help him
Ye surely would skelp him, and shorten his horns.

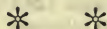
Taunted in this seditious manner, the tailor evoked the muse and wrote a rhyming epistle to Burns, which has been published in several editions of the poet's works. The poem opens in the following strain:—

What waefu' news is this I hear?
Frae greetin' I can scarce forbear,
Folks tell me ye're gaun aff this year
Out ower the sea,
An' lasses wham ye lo'e sae dear
Will greet for thee.

Weel wad I like were ye to stay,
But, Robin, since you will away,
I ha'e a word yet mair to say,
An' maybe twa:
May He protect us night an' day
That made us a'.

To this effusion, which goes on in an indelicate but friendly enough manner to warn the poet against the error of his ways, Burns gave no reply, and Simson conceived the idea of replying himself, and actually palmed off on the tailor a poetical rejoinder purporting to be from Burns, which was so clever that it appeared as a genuine Burns composition in some of the earlier editions.

Walker, although a very indifferent rhymmer, was respected in the village for his "sobriety, honesty, and glee."



ROBERT HETTERICK.

To Robert Hetterick the Scottish lyre was sweeter than the anvil's sound, and in "the sessions of sweet, silent thought," or with the sonorous ring of the forehammer in his ear, he was wont ever and at all times to give the Muse a hearty reception. The musical ring of his father's anvil was the melody to which his fertile mind set the rhythm of words—words destined to live long after the sound of the anvil had ceased to vibrate in the streets of Dalmellington. As a student of such works as Addison's "Spectator," "Robertson's History of Scotland," "Life of Sir William Wallace," and other classical works, he quenched his literary thirst at the purest streams of Literature.

Such varied studies laid the foundation of a broad, clear style, which is characteristic of all his writings. His youthful imagination was inspired and deepened also by the enchanting and romantic scenery of Glen Ness, in the neighbourhood of his native village, the chief effort of his muse being a descriptive poem having for its theme "The Craggs of Ness." Says the poet:—

Let me lead your fancy back again
To view the beauties of this wondrous glen,
Where the hand of Nature everywhere pervades
And blends the barren rocks and verdant shades.

And, truly, any lover of nature who has visited this romantic glen will readily go back in fancy with the poet to view its beauties and silently contemplate the grandeur and wonders of Nature.

SONG.

Where Doon pours forth her liquid stores,
And through the glens and caverns roars,
Dashing on the hazley shores
And rocks sae steep and eerie O;

There on the shelving river side,
 Fair Catherine dwells in virgin pride,
 Whose beauty decks the country side,
 As roses deck the briery O.

The blossoms spreading on the tree
 Sae fair and pure could scarcely be,
 Her heart frae guile and malice free
 Was ever blythe and cheery O;
 O, were she o' a low degree
 To tend the sheep and goats wi' me,
 The cares o' life wad lighter be,
 My heart wad never weary O.

The winter winds might rave and blaw
 Their drifted flakes o' sleet and snaw,
 Fair July wad pervade them a'
 In presence o' my dearie O;
 O, sweet as roses newly blawn,
 And blythe as warblers in the dawn
 May Catherine range the spreading lawn
 Where Doon rows on sae clearly O.

The above is a fair example of Mr Hetterick's song-composition. We conclude our notice of him by submitting a specimen of his patriotic verse:—

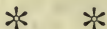
How blest is our country where freedom is growing,
 Like the pine of the forest perpetually green;
 Where the breasts of the brave Caledonians are glowing
 With all that ennobles the children of men.
 They are born to be free as the wind on the mountains,
 That raves in the tempest and smiles in the gale;
 And their hearts are as pure as the clear rolling fountains
 That stream from the rocks to meander the dale.

As for base-hearted tyrants, they hate and detest them,
 Even though in the field they were gallant and brave;
 For their power or dominion, who dares to resist them
 Are doomed to the gibbet, the rack, and the grave.
 But Wallace and Bruce, from the battle so gory—
 In the cause of their country never would flee—
 They fought for their freedom, their country, and glory,
 To fall in the carnage, or stand to be free.

And the brave Caledonians—the worthy descendants
 Of heroes and chieftains that flourished of yore,
 Will never relinquish the brave independence
 That Wallace had strove to inherit before.
 Though tyrants may league to deprive them of freedom—
 The national right that's so dear to them a',
 They still will have heroes and patriots to lead them,
 Like Bruce to reconquer, or Wallace to fa'.

Though our land is begirt by the cold, stormy ocean,
 Our dark, misty mountains are rugged and bare,
 Yet these dark, misty mountains excite our devotion,
 The goddess of freedom is worshippéd there.

And long may she reign in our mountains and valleys;
 And long may our worship be warm and sincere;
 Then freedom and right, from the boor to the palace,
 Will grow and will flourish perpetually there.



DAVID WOOD.

Nature showered her poetic favours with as stinted a hand on David Wood as she did on the tailor of Ochiltree. David was an unlettered ploughman, with residence in or near New Cumnock. He called one day at Paterson's printing office, in Kilmarnock, saying he had "a book to print." "And where's your manuscript?" said Paterson. "D'ye mean the writing?" asked the New Cumnock bard. "It's here," he continued, pointing to his head, and the publisher advised him to come back when his poems were in manuscript. Wood went home, got a friend to act as his amanuensis, and "feth he'll prent it" was writ large on the ambitious bard's countenance for many days. His verses were in due course published in book form, and, although they are feeble in the extreme, it is said that the author derived a handsome profit from the sale of his volume. The story goes that Wood and the Dundonald poet, Charles Lockhart, met one day in Irvine and adjourned to a tavern for a half-hour of conviviality. The mountain-dew went round, and the two worthies made a challenge as to which of them would compose the best *extempore* stanza of four lines, when Lockhart enraged his companion by thus playing on the word "Wood":—

When Davie first the muse did court
 (The base, ungrateful limmer),
 She swore she never would impart
 Her virtue into timmer.

It should be added in favour of David Wood, the New Cumnock bard, that he submitted his effusions with much diffidence to public notice, and was well aware of their imperfections



ALEXANDER BOSWELL.

The Boswells of Auchinleck came into Great Britain with William the Conqueror, settled first at Balmuto, in Fifeshire, and afterwards at Auchinleck, in Ayrshire.

Alexander Boswell was the son of Dr Johnson's biographer, and was educated at Eton and Oxford Universities.

On the death of his father in 1795 he succeeded to the Auchinleck estates, married, and settled down to the life of a country gentleman. His literary and antiquarian tastes were fostered by stores of ancient literature, accumulated by his forbears in the famous Auchinleck Library.

At Auchinleck he set up a printing press, and published many rare and ancient treatises, together with several poems of his own composition, which he presented to his friends.

Boswell was on intimate terms with Sir Walter Scott and Joseph Train. His love of Scottish poetry was chiefly stimulated by a warm admiration of the poems and songs of Robert Burns, whose efforts in a measure he tried to emulate. He it was who originated the scheme for erecting a monument to our National Poet at Alloway, and by his own efforts raised a handsome sum towards this purpose. He was assisted eventually by other admirers of the poet, and on the 25th of January, 1820, had the satisfaction, as Deputy Grand Master of the Mother Lodge of Kilwinning, of laying the foundation stone of the Alloway Monument.

Boswell was returned member of Parliament for Ayrshire in 1816, and as Lieutenant-Colonel of the Ayrshire Yeomanry Cavalry took part in maintaining order during the stormy and oft-times riotous days of Reform.

In Alexander Boswell the authorities found a person well qualified to cope with the strained situation, and for his loyalty and public services he was rewarded by a Baronetcy. Meanwhile, amid the clamour and din of political warfare, he continued to cultivate the muse, writing songs, poems, and political satires, as the humour of the hour prompted.

Unfortunately, a "Whig Song," which appeared in the pages of the "Glasgow Sentinel," gave offence to James Stewart, Esq., younger of Dunearn, and that gentleman having traced the MS. to Sir Alexander Boswell, a challenge was the unavoidable consequence. The duel took place near the village of Auchtertool, in Fifeshire, on 26th March, 1822, when Sir Alexander was mortally wounded, and expired in the course of next day.

The following verses from the pen of Sir Walter Scott were written to commemorate the tragic and suicidal duel:—

"Oh! where have you been my gallant knight,
So far from the West Countrie?"
"I have been to weep o'er a brother's bier,
Who was right dear to me!"
"Then linger not in Edinburgh toun,
For thy foes await thee there."

"To-morrow's sun shall see me home
To the banks of woody Ayr!"

"Ah! whither row'st thou, Lady bright,
So far to the North Countrie?"
 "I fly to save my gallant Lord,
Who is right dear to me!"
 "If you are the Lady of Auchinleck,
On the banks of the woody Ayr,
Your Lord lies low on the farther beach,
For his foes have met him there!"

Alas! vindictive was the wrath,
And fatal was the blow,
Thou pride of Scotia's chivalry,
In death that laid thee low.

Several of Boswell's songs, from their quaint humour and pawky style, may safely be classed as permanent acquisitions to Scottish poesy.

JENNY'S BAWBEE.

I met four chaps yon birks amang
Wi' hinging lugs¹ and faces lang;
I speered² at Neebour Bauldy Strang,
Wha's they I see?
 Quo' he, ilk cream-faced pawky chiel
Thought himself cunnin' as the deil,
And here they cam' awa' to steal
Jenny's bawbee.³

The first a Captain to his trade,
Wi' skull ill-lined but back weel-clad,
March'd round the barn, and by the shed,
And popped on his knee;
 Quo' he, "My goddess, nymph, and queen,
Your beauty's dazzled baith my een!"
 But deil a beauty he had seen
But—Jenny's bawbee.

A Lawyer neist wi' blatherin' gab⁴
Wha speeches wove like ony wab,
In ilk ane's corn aye took a dab,
And a' for a fee.
 Accounts he owed through a' the toun,
And tradesmen's tongues nae mair could drown,
But now he thocht to clout⁵ his gown
Wi' Jenny's bawbee.

A Norland Laird neist trotted up,
Wi' bowsend nag⁶ and siller whip,
Cried, "There's my beast, lad, haud the grup,⁷
Or tie't till a tree!

What's gowd⁸ to me? I've walth o' lan'!
 Bestow on ane o' worth your haun'!"
 He thoct to pay what he was awn⁹
 Wi' Jenny's bawbee.

A Spruce frae band-boxes and tubs,
 A Thing cam' neist (but life has rubs),
 Foul were the roads and fu' the dubs,
 And jaupit¹⁰ a' was he.
 He danced up squintin' through a glass,
 And grinned, "I' faith, a bonnie lass!"
 He thoct to win wi' front o' brass,
 Jenny's bawbee.

She bade the Laird gae kame¹¹ his wig,
 The soger no' to strut sae big,
 The lawyer no' to be a prig,
 The fool, he cried, "Teehee!
 I kenn'd that I could never fail!"
 She preen'd the dishclout to his tail
 And soused him in the water-pail,
 And kept her bawbee.

1 Ears. 2 Asked. 3 Halfpenny. 4 Idle or nonsensical talk. 5 Patch. 6 A riding horse having a white stripe down its face. 7 Hold the grip. 8 Gold. 9 Owing. 10 Mud-splashed. 11 Comb.

JENNY DANG THE WEAVER.

At Willie's wedding o' the green,
 The lasses, bonnie witches,
 Were buskit out in aprons clean
 And snaw-white Sunday mutches.
 Auld Mysie bade the lads tak' tent,
 But Jock wad na believe her,
 But soon the fool his folly kent,
 For—Jenny dang the Weaver.

In ilka country-dance and reel
 Wi' her he wad be babbin';
 When she sat down, then he sat down,
 And till her wad be gabbin';
 Whare'er she gaed, or butt or ben,
 The coof wad never leave her,
 Aye cacklin', like a clockin' hen,
 But—Jenny dang the Weaver.

Quo' he, "My lass, to speak my mind,
 Gude haith, I needna swither,
 Ye've bonnie een, and gif ye're kind,
 I needna court anither."
 He hummed and haw'd—the lass cried pheugh!
 And bade the fool no deave her;
 Then crack'd her thumb, and lap, and leugh,
 And—dang the silly Weaver.

The following song is a translation from the German, and to it the translator appended the following note:—"Translated at Leipsic in 1795. Several versions of this song have been published. If this is the least elegant, it is perhaps the most literal."

Taste life's glad moments
 Whilst the wasting taper glows;
 Pluck, ere it withers,
 The quickly fading rose.
 Man blindly follows grief and care,
 He seeks for thorns and finds his share,
 Whilst violets to the passing air
 Unheeded shed their blossoms.
 Taste life's glad moments, etc.

Though timorous nature veils her form,
 And rolling thunder spreads alarm;
 Yet, ah! how soft when lull'd the storm
 The sun smiles forth at even!
 Taste life's glad moments, etc.

To him who Spleen and Envy flies,
 And meek Contentment well can prize,
 The humble plant a tree shall rise,
 Which golden fruit will yield him.
 Taste life's glad moments, etc.

Who fosters Faith in upright breast,
 And freely gives to the distress'd,
 There shall Contentment build her nest,
 And flutter round his bosom.
 Taste life's glad moments, etc.

And when life's path grows dark and strait,
 And pressing ills on ills await,
 Then Friendship, sorrow to abate,
 The helping hand will offer.
 Taste life's glad moments, etc.

She dries his tears, she strews his way,
 Even to the grave, with flow'rets gay,
 Turns night to morn, and morn to day,
 And pleasure still increases.
 Taste life's glad moments, etc.

Of Life she is the fairest band,
 Joins brothers truly hand in hand;
 Thus onward to a better land
 Man journeys light and cheer'ly.
 Taste Life's glad moments
 Whilst the wasting taper glows;
 Pluck, ere it withers,
 The quickly fading rose.

JAMES BOSWELL.

The name and fame of Boswell in Ayrshire literature does not end with Sir Alexander, whose younger brother James was also a noted litterateur and a classical scholar of high distinction. James Boswell died in London only a few weeks previous to the melancholy tragedy at Auchtertool. That he possessed the lyrical gift in no small measure may be gleaned from the following sweetly-flowing lines:—

LARGHAN CLANBRASSIL.

Larghan Clanbrassil, how sweet is thy sound
To my tender remembrance! as Love's sacred ground;
For there Margaret Caroline first charmed my sight,
And filled my young heart with a fluttering delight.

When I thought her my own, ah! too short seemed the day
For a jaunt to Downpatrick, or a trip on the sea;
To express what I felt then all language were vain,
'Twas in truth what the poets have studied to feign.

But too late I found even she could deceive,
And nothing was left but to weep, sigh, and rave;
Distracted I fled from my dear native shore,
Resolved to see Larghan Clanbrassil no more.

Yet still in some moments enchanted I find
A ray of her fondness beam soft on my mind;
While thus in bless'd fancy my angel I see,
All the world is a Larghan Clanbrassil to me.



JOSEPH TRAIN.

Joseph Train is remembered as an antiquary who won the friendship and esteem of Sir Walter Scott rather than by virtue of his poetical genius. He it was who furnished much valuable traditional lore to the great novelist, who afterwards worked the material with a masterly hand into his inimitable romances. Train was born in Sorn, but spent his early years in Ayr. In the spring-time of life he was balloted for the Ayrshire Militia, and on getting his discharge was appointed an officer of Excise, a vocation which proved congenial to his antiquarian tastes, for in his periodical surveys over Galloway and "the borders" of Carrick he was able to glean from the country people valuable stores of traditional lore. After his

retiral from the Excise, he took up residence in the neighbourhood of Castle-Douglas, corresponding frequently with Sir Walter Scott, besides furnishing much matter of antiquarian interest to Chalmers, the author of "Caledonia." It might truthfully be said of Joseph Train—

"A man of infinite remembrance he was,
And things foregone through many ages held,
Which he recorded still as they did pass,
Nor suffered them to perish through long eld."

ELCINE DE AGGART.

When in 1588 the Spaniards attempted to invade our shores, tradition saith that Elcine De Aggart, a reputed witch of Carrick, who had power to raise a tempest at her command, seated herself upon a promontory when some of the Spanish ships appeared in the Firth of Clyde. Holding a ball of blue yarn in one of her hands, which was called the thread of Fate, as the vessels bore up the Channel the tempest increased, and the weird sister chanted the following song:—

Why gallops the palfrey with Lady Dunure?
Who takes away Turnberry's kine from the shore?
Go tell it in Carrick, and tell it in Kyle,
Although the proud Dons are now passing the Moil*
 On this magic clue
 That in Fairyland grew,
Old Elcine de Aggart has taken in hand
To wind up their lives ere they win to our strand.

That heaven may favour this grand armament,
Against us poor heretic islanders sent;
From altars a thousand, though frank incense fly,
Though ten thousand chapel bells peal in the sky
 By this mystic clue
 Made in Elfland when new,
Old Elcine de Aggart will all countermand,
And wind up their lives ere they win to our strand.

They bring with them nobles our castles to fill;
They bring with them ploughshares our manors to till;
They likewise bring fetters our barons to bind,
Or any whom they may refractory find;
 But this mighty clue,
 Of the indigo hue,
Which few, like de Aggart, could ere understand,
Will baffle their hopes ere they win to our strand.

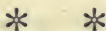
* The Cape of Cantyre.

Was ever the sprite of the wind seen to lower,
 So dark o'er the Clyde as in this fatal hour?
 Rejoice ev'ry one may to see the waves now
 Each ship passing o'er from the poop to the bow,
 With this magic clue,
 That in Fairyland grew,
 Old Elcine de Aggart has wound to an end
 Their thread of existence, though far from the strand.

I sigh for their dames, who may now take the veil;
 For babes who the loss of their sires may bewail:
 But while the great death-bell of Toledo tolls,
 And friars unceasingly pray for their souls
 With this mystic clue
 Made when Elfland was new.

Who will not give praise, in her own native land
 To Elcine de Aggart for guarding the strand?

Come back on your palfrey, my Lady Dunure,
 Go bring back old Turnberry's kine to the shore;
 And tell it you may over Carrick and Kyle,
 The last ship has sunk by our good Lady Isle,
 And while such a clue
 Of the indigo blue,
 Old Elcine de Aggart has at her command,
 A foreign foe never shall come to our strand.



ARCHIBALD CRAWFORD.

The garrulous Doctor Johnson once expressed the opinion that to a Scotsman the most picturesque road was the high road leading to London. It is doubtful if Archibald Crawford held any such notion when at the age of thirteen he was sent from his native town of Ayr to learn the bakery trade with a relative who resided in the English Metropolis. Perhaps a more picturesque road was discovered by the young dough-worker when after the lapse of eight years he turned his face northward and headed for "bonnie Scotland." On returning to his native Ayr he resolved to abandon the bakery business, and removed to Edinburgh, and thereafter to Perth, where he entered the service of Leith Hay, Esq., M.P., in whose employment he remained upwards of five years. As the swallow returneth to its old nest, so Crawford gravitated back to Ayr. Here he entered into business first as a grocer, and afterwards as an auctioneer and dealer in old furniture. About this time he formed a close friendship with John Goldie, then editor of the "Ayr and Wigtonshire Courier," contributing to that newspaper a series of sketches, entitled "Tales of My Grandmother," which were founded chiefly on traditions familiar in

the West of Scotland, and which were afterwards published in book form by Messrs Constable & Co., Edinburgh. With the assistance of one or two literary friends, Crawford originated a weekly periodical in Ayr under the title of "The Correspondent," and subsequently published a periodical on his own account, which he named "The Gaberlunzie," and in which a few of his own best pieces appeared.

His best known song, "Bonnie Mary Hay," was composed as a grateful acknowledgment of the kindness bestowed on him by Keith Hay's daughter at a time when he was suffering under a malignant fever. Crawford was no "full-voiced poet," yet this "one touch of nature" on the part of a disinterested lady drew from him a song of merit sufficient to keep green the memory of his heroine through all these years.

Bonnie Mary Hay, I will lo'e thee yet,
For thy eye is the slae, thy hair is the jet;
The snaw is thy skin, and the rose is thy cheek;
Bonnie Mary Hay, I will lo'e thee yet.

Bonnie Mary Hay, will you gang wi' me,
When the sun's in the west, to the hawthorn tree;
To the hawthorn tree in the bonnie berry den,
And I'll tell you, Mary, how I lo'e you then?

Bonnie Mary Hay, it's haliday to me
When thou art couthie, kind, and free;
There's nae clouds in the lift, nor storms in the sky,
Bonnie Mary Hay, when thou art nigh.

Bonnie Mary Hay, thou mauna say me nay,
But come to the bower by the hawthorn brae!
But come to the bow'r, and I'll tell you a' what's true—
I ne'er can lo'e ony ither but you.

SCOTLAND, I HAVE NO HOME BUT THEE!

Scotland, thy mountains, thy valleys, and fountains
Are famous in story—the birthplace of song;
Thy daughters the fairest, the sweetest, the rarest,
Well may thy pilgrims long for their home.
Trace the whole world o'er, find me a fairer shore,
The grave of my fathers, the land of the free;
Joy to the rising race, Heav'n send them every grace,
Scotland, dear Scotland, I have no home but thee!

Glow on, ye southern skies, where fruits wear richer dyes,
To pamper the bigot, assassin, and slave;
Scotland, to thee I'll twine, with all thy varied clime,
For the fruits that thou bearest are true hearts and brave.
Trace the whole world o'er, find me a fairer shore,
The grave of my fathers, the land of the free;
Joy to the rising race, Heav'n send them every grace,
Scotland, dear Scotland, I have no home but thee!

ALEXANDER JAMIESON.

The thread of life which binds mortals to this world is as a spider's thread in the hands of fate. Yet it is something to say, "I have lived." Alexander Jamieson met his fate in July, 1826, when, on descending the Ochil mountains, he missed his footing and was precipitated into a ravine two hundred feet in depth. Yet he lives in song. A native of Dalmellington, he shares the poetical laurels of that town with Robert Hetterick. After the usual course of study required for entering the medical profession, he settled at Alloa, and had established a good business as practitioner and apothecary when death overtook him.

Two of Doctor Jamieson's lyrical pieces, here given, were deemed worthy of a place in Volume IV. of "The Modern Scottish Minstrel," a valuable work edited by the late Dr Charles Rogers.

THE MAID WHO WOVE.*

The maid who wove the rosy wreath
 With every flower—hath wrought a spell,
 And though her chaplets fragrance breathe
 And balmy sweets—I know full well,
 'Neath every bud or blossom gay
 There lurks a chain—Love's tyranny.

Though round her ruby lips enshrined
 Sits stillness soft as evening skies—
 Though crimson'd cheek you seldom find,
 Or glances from her downcast eyes—
 There lurks, unseen, a world of charms,
 Which ne'er betray young Love's alarms.

O, trust not to her silent tongue;
 Her settled calm, or absent smile;
 Nor dream that nymph so fair and young
 May not enchain in Love's soft guile;
 For where Love is, or what's Love's spell—
 No mortal knows; no tongue can tell.

A SIGH AND A SMILE.

From Beauty's soft lip, like the balm of its roses,
 Or breath of the morning, a sigh took its flight;
 Nor far had it stray'd forth, when Pity proposes
 The wand'rer should lodge in this bosom a night.

* Miss Jane Morrison, of Alloa, the heroine of Motherwell's well-known song, "Jeanie Morrison."

But scarce had the guest in that peaceful seclusion
 His lodging secured, when a conflict arose.
 Each feeling was changed, every thought was delusion,
 No longer my breast knew the calm of repose.

They say that young Love is a rosy-cheek'd bowyer,
 At random the shafts from his silken string fly;
 But surely the urchin of peace is destroyer
 Whose arrows are dipp'd in the balm of a sigh.

O yes! for he whisper'd, "To Beauty's shrine hie thee!
 There worship to Cupid, and wait yet awhile;
 A cure she can give, with the balm can supply thee;
 The wound from a sigh can be cured by a smile."



Rev. Professor JOHN BURTT.

It has been said that titles do not adorn men, but men adorn their titles. John Burtt was an untitled gentleman, but nevertheless he adorned his profession, and gave the world another example of how circumstances can be moulded by Scottish grit, industry, and iron will. Born in the parish of Riccarton, the son of a coachman, he knew nothing of affluence in his early years, but struggling manfully and bravely, "he burst his birth's invidious bar, and grappled with his evil star," until at length from being a toiler in a Kilmarnock woollen mill he rose to fill the Chair of Ecclesiastical History in a Hall of Divinity in Cincinnati.

One romantic episode of his career cannot be overlooked. When about sixteen years of age he went to Greenock to visit some relatives there, when, without the slightest warning, he was kidnapped and pressed into the service of the Navy, in which he was compelled to serve five years before an opportunity was given him of re-visiting the scenes of his boyhood. Previous to emigrating to the United States of America, where he ultimately made his mark as a scholarly divine, he was engaged as a school teacher in Kilmarnock and afterwards in Paisley. A song from his pen, entitled "O'er the Mist-Shrouded Cliffs," was for many years attributed to Robert Burns, but is undoubtedly the composition of John Burtt.

O'ER THE MIST-SHROUDED CLIFFS.

O'er the mist-shrouded cliffs of the low mountain straying,
 Where the wild winds of winter incessantly rave;
 What woes wring my heart while intently surveying
 The storm's gloomy path on the breast of the wave?

Ye foam-crested billows allow me to wail,
 Ere ye toss me afar from my loved native shore;
 Where the flow'r which bloom'd sweetest in Coila's green vale,
 The pride of my bosom, my Mary's no more!

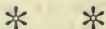
No more by the banks of the streamlet we'll wander,
 And smile at the moon's rippled face in the wave;
 No more shall my arms cling with fondness around her,
 For the dewdrops of morning fall cold on her grave.
 No more shall the soft thrill of love warm my breast!
 I haste with the storm to a far distant shore,
 Where unknown, unlamented, my ashes shall rest,
 And joy shall revisit my bosom no more!

DARK IS THE NIGHT.

Dark is the night: the wintry blast
 Sings through the leafless thorn;
 The setting moon far in the west
 Half shows her waning horn;
 But lassie, dearest to my heart,
 In spite of wind or rain,
 We'll blythely meet and blythely part
 And blythely meet again.

What though the wintry tempest pour
 Its fury o'er the lea,
 My Mary's hut will shade the show'r
 And turn the blast from me.
 Then lassie, dearest to my heart,
 In spite of wind or rain,
 We'll blythely meet and blythely part
 And blythely meet again.

What though no star with friendly beam
 Look through the murky sky!
 What though no torch's ardent gleam
 Direct me where to fly!
 Steered by the impulse of my heart,
 In spite of wind or rain,
 We'll blythely meet and blythely part
 And blythely meet again.

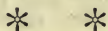


Rev. THOMAS BURNS, LL.D.

Several of the descendants and relatives of the National Bard of Scotland gained distinction in professional and commercial circles, and not the least worthy of them is Thomas, son of Gilbert Burns, who was born at the farm of Mossgiel, in Mauchline parish, a few months previous to the death of his celebrated uncle. Gilbert Burns subsequently removed

from Ayrshire to Haddingtonshire, where Thomas received his early schooling, being for a time the pupil of Edward Irving. When sixteen years of age he entered the University of Edinburgh, and after the customary theological training was licensed in 1823 by the Presbytery of Haddington, and subsequently was appointed to the charge of Ballantrae Parish. While minister of Ballantrae he married the niece of the Rev. Mr Grant of Monkton; and Mr Grant dying shortly afterwards, Thomas Burns succeeded to the charge, in which he laboured for thirteen years. During his ministry in Monkton a new church was erected, and in this living he might have continued to the end of his days had he not chosen to throw himself into the struggle which culminated in the "Disruption." In loyalty to conscience, he abandoned church and manse, and was followed by a section of the congregation, to whom he preached for a time in the stackyard of a farmhouse. Some four or five years after his separation from Monkton Church he set sail for New Zealand, where he was appointed minister of the Free Church, being the first to occupy a Free Church pulpit in Otago.

Mr Burns was deemed worthy of being honoured with the degree of Doctor of Laws, and as a preacher, patriot, and poet holds a high place in the estimation of his countrymen, and more especially of his fellow-colonists, who have commemorated him in Dunedin by a column crowned by a Maltese cross, and which is placed close to the bronze statue of the national poet of Scotland.



JOHN GOLDIE.

John Goldie, who adopted the pen-name of "Nichol Nemo," was the son of a sea captain, and a native of Ayr. His first training in business was in a grocer's store, but he left this employment at the end of a few years, and entered the service of a china and stoneware merchant in Paisley. After being a few years in this employment he returned to his native town and set up in business there as a china and stoneware merchant. The business proving unsuccessful, he turned his attention wholly to literary work, and obtaining an appointment on the staff of the "Ayr Courier," was at length promoted to the position of chief editor. On the proprietorship of the paper changing hands, another editor was appointed in room of Mr Goldie. Under these circumstances, Goldie made his way to London in hopes of obtaining a situation on the staff of one or other of the Metropolitan newspapers; but although

he was courteously received everywhere and his literary talents duly recognised, he was unable to gain a footing in the great nerve and brain centre of our mighty Empire. With a weary heart, and pressed on by sheer pecuniary distress, the poor ousted provincial editor retraced his steps to Scotland. What his thoughts were at this interesting period of his career can only be conjectured, and if a thousand and one poets had whispered in his ear, "the poet in a golden clime was born with golden stars above," he would have met their insinuations with a look dowered and burning with the agony of disappointed hopes.

Arrived back in Ayr, he did not linger long in his native shades, but proceeded to Paisley, where after a time he succeeded in establishing the "Paisley Advertiser," this being the pioneer newspaper of the town of poets and bobbin thread. While in Paisley he found a fast friend in William Motherwell, the poet, who subsequently became an interested party in the management of the "Advertiser." Mr Goldie's career was abruptly closed by apoplexy in 1826, at which time he was editing a work entitled "The Spirit of British Song."

LINES ON SEEING THE MONUMENT ERECTING TO BURNS AT ALLOWAY.

Yes! raise the proud pile to the bard that is gone,
 Which his merit so justly may claim;
 For, has Britain a home where his fame is unknown,
 Or a hut that ne'er echoed his name?

O, beats there a breast that with freedom e'er glow'd,
 And ne'er thrilled at his wild-sounding lyre;
 Or beams there an eye where the tear never flow'd
 O'er the bard who those strains could inspire?

Shall our tartan plaids shrink from the ranks of the brave,
 Or our claymores be turn'd from the spot,
 Where the bright flag of freedom and glory shall wave,
 Or the name of our Burns be forgot?

No! corruption has moulder'd his clay in the dust,
 O'er his grave the wild winter wind blows;
 But his mem'ry shall bloom ever green in the breasts
 That forget not their friends—nor their foes.

And his strains shall ennoble the land of his birth,
 And be echoed in mountain and grove;
 Whilst a pibroch shall swell on the hills of the north,
 Or a heart beat for glory or love.

The fresh-blooming laurel that circles his name
 Eternity only shall wither;
 For time, and the bright blazing torch of his fame
 Shall sink into darkness together.

LINES WRITTEN ON A BRONZED BUST OF VENUS.

I boast no nymph whose graceful neck
 The purest snows of winter deck,
 With ruby lips, and balmy sigh,
 With rosy cheek, and sparkling eye;
 For sweetest flowers that meadows deck,
 'Neath winter's frown must with'ring lie,
 And age will blight the fairest cheek,
 And death will dim the brightest eye.

Not so the maid whom now I sing,
 With cheek as dark as raven's wing;
 No fading charms her face will shew
 From summer's sun or winter's snow;
 If on her cheeks no roses bloom,
 Her brows ne'er darkened with a frown,
 And who would not prefer a spouse
 With raven cheeks to frowning brows?
 What though her eyes seem dark and cold,
 Her looks are ever sweet and young;
 Her lips are never op'd to scold,
 For silence dwells upon her tongue.



JOHN ANDREW.

To have the reputation of being a talented poet and the father of two poets as well is surely no mean honour. The Andrews of Ochiltree, father and two sons, were all gifted with the divine afflatus in more or less degree. John Andrew was a native of Ayr, but settled in Ochiltree, where he distinguished himself as a person of remarkable versatility and rectitude. To his initial trade of handloom weaving he added those of bookbinding, upholstery, and house decoration, all of which he carried on successfully. In literature he earned local fame by sketches and verses contributed to various newspapers under the *nom de plume* of "Werdna."

THE CALL FROM HEAVEN—"COME AWAY."

I am coming, Father! coming,
 I am coming to thy throne;
 Soft whispers I am hearing
 As I sit and muse alone;
 Soft whispers I am hearing,
 And they bid me come away.
 I am coming, Father! coming,
 For Thy call I would obey.

'Tis not that I am weary
 Of the life Thou giv'st me here;
 I scarce have had a pain to feel,
 And scarce a frown to fear;
 And in my lowly dwelling
 Joy reigns both night and day;
 But yet I'm coming, Father!
 For Thy call I would obey.

Thou giv'st me sons and daughters,
 And they cling around my heart;
 Thou gav'st me one yet dearer still,
 From whom I'm loath to part;
 Thou gav'st me many truthful friends
 To cheer life's joyous way;
 But if it be Thy will, I come,
 Or if Thy will, I stay.

O no! I am not weary
 Of the life Thou giv'st me here,
 For there be many joyous things
 All round the rolling year;
 But is it not Thy call I hear?
 It bids me come away:
 A voiceless call it is, and yet
 I hear it night and day.

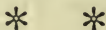
I hear it in the streamlet
 As it passes to the sea;
 I hear it in the withered leaf
 That rustles o'er the lea;
 I hear it in the chime of bells
 That greet the Sabbath day—
 To me they ever seem to call
 "Arise! and come away."

And oh! why should I linger,
 My house to re-arrange,
 To set it more in order
 Before the awful change?
 Oh! let my soul but cleansèd be
 From every stain of sin,
 That to my Father's house I may
 Arise and enter in.

And Father! I beseech Thee
 That Thou would'st of Thy grace
 Give me the spotless righteous robe
 In which to take my place:
 For how can I approach Thee
 Or sit beside Thy throne
 With garments such as mine are—
 All soiled, and sin bestrewn?

Oh! how can I approach Thee—
 How in Thy sight appear?
 Thou who alone art holy,
 I tremble to draw near.

My Father, oh, my Father!
 Behold my soul's distress,
 Look on Thine own anointed—
 The Lord my Righteousness.



CHARLES LOCKHART.

The contagious itch for writing and publishing Scottish vernacular verse, which set in shortly after the issue of Burns's first Kilmarnock edition, seems to have broken out afresh in Ayrshire immediately after the death of the great poet. Charles Lockhart of Dundonald was one who fell a victim to the rhyming disorder, and issued no fewer than three editions of his musings, the third one being dated at Dundonald, 1838.

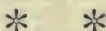
We have been unable to glean any information about this bard further than is afforded by the few notes attached to his poems, from which it seems that in early manhood he was for a time in the employment of the contractors for the Kilmarnock and Troon Railway. It would appear also that he was engaged for a time as a teacher of music and as an advertising agent for the "Ayr Observer" newspaper. He was a contemporary of David Sillar, and had the honour of his acquaintance; but he must have been a much younger man than his fellow-poet, as he is still remembered by some of the old people in Dundonald. He excels in humorous verse, a great number of his pieces being in the form of poetical epistles to friends and acquaintances.

EPISTLE TO A FRIEND, WITH A COPY OF BURNS'S LETTERS.

Dear Sir,—I now return your beuk;
 I've aften traced it every neuk,
 Wi' persevering care.
 Tho' e'er sae aft I've read it ower,
 Yet when again on it I glower
 I prize it still the mair.
 Aft ha'e I sat till twal at night
 Ere I could think to budge,
 When forc'd to quat for want o' light,
 'Twas always wi' a grudge.
 Tho' fasht whiles, and lasht whiles,
 Wi' hardships cruel waun,
 I'm ay right, I'm ay tight,
 When Robin's in my haun'.

Some frozen-hearted, callous trash
 Wad fain gi'e Burns's name the lash;
 But oh, their views how mean!
 To worth and common-sense they're blind—
 Black superstition clouds their mind—
 Hypocrisy's their screen.
 Wha wadna hit the rascal hard
 'Twad be sae far misled
 As persecute the sweetest bard
 That ever Scotia bred?
 Beware then, tak' care then,
 O' sic censorious core;
 Refrain them, disdain them,
 Their principles abhor.

For hum'rous fun, for social glee,
 For hamely style, for writing free,
 For lively, witty turns,
 For every sympathetic part
 That can possess a feeling heart
 There's nane can cope wi' Burns.
 His works declare a judgment clear,
 An independent mind;
 His eye aft shed the friendly tear,
 His bosom still was kind.
 While woods grow, while floods row,
 While verdure cleads the plain;
 While winds blaw, while rains fa',
 His mem'ry shall remain.



JOHN WRIGHT.

John Wright, who is frequently but incorrectly styled "the Galston Poet," was born at the farmhouse of Auchencloich, in the parish of Sorn. He spent the greater part of his boyhood in Galston, however, and always claimed Galston as his native village, for, indeed, he knew no other. A few months under the eye of the village dominie completed his school training, and he was well on in his teens before he acquired the useful art of caligraphy. He had a wonderful memory, and on a certain occasion carried off a prize by repeating from memory the whole of the 119th Psalm. Through lack of proper education and training, he grew up a wild, reckless lad, of a rollicking and cheerful nature. He had the misfortune, however, to meet with an accident, which rendered him unconscious for two or three days, and when he recovered it was noticed that his gay and buoyant nature had given way to a nervous melancholy, which haunted him through all his future years, and to which the dissipated habits which darkened his closing years may in some measure be attributed. In John Wright's

time handloom weaving was almost the only trade that offered steady employment to the villagers. The young poet was accordingly sent at an early age to learn all that was worth knowing about heddles and treddles. In those days the knights of the shuttle were typical of all that was intellectual in village life, and John Wright profited by the teaching he got in his master's weaving shop, which in its way was a miniature debating school. At length he acquired so much information of a general kind that (to use his own words) "he determined to set up thinking for himself," and when scarce more than sixteen years of age he began to compose a tragedy, which he entitled "Mahomet or the Hegira," retaining on his retentive memory upwards of 1500 lines before being induced by his friends to abandon it. His next literary composition was "The Retrospect," which, by the advice of Professor Wilson, Henry Glassford Bell, and others, he published in Edinburgh, and which passed through two editions, bringing the poet both fame and emolument. His Galston friends looked coldly and sneeringly on his literary efforts, the iron entered the poet's soul, and thus he mourned:—

"Round his own lovely village centred all
 His loves, his hopes, his wishes, till he found
 His cup of bliss then filled with burning gall
 By Envy's squinting horde that gathered round
 And o'er his path of fame did foully crawl,
 Like hissing adders when his hopes were crown'd.
 His musæ they tried to blight, but she unmarr'd
 They fell to work upon himself—the bard!"

In the "Street Remarkers," a poem full of lashing satire, he takes up the same subject, but in a less exalted strain. From Galston John Wright removed to Cambuslang, where he married, and worked for a time at the loom; but business being unusually dull, he abandoned the weaving trade and led a roving life through the country, selling copies of his second edition. This peripatetic life ultimately led him into dissipated habits, ruined his health, and brought him to an early grave. He died in Glasgow, and there must have been tragic pathos in the spectacle of this unfortunate son of genius, dragged by poverty and disease to the wards of a city hospital, and there closing his eyes for ever on the world. Wright's poems rise far above the average of local musings, and abound with passages of striking beauty, in which rural images and moral reflections are subtly blended. Some of his shorter pieces will endure as long as poetry of high excellence continues to be appreciated.

LINES TO A PEBBLE FOUND ON THE GRAVE OF ROBERT BURNS'S FATHER.

Long 'neath the green sod, thou bright eyed gem;
 Thou'st lain, by no rude hand arrested;
 Long hast thou lain o'er the ashes of him,
 The sire of the bard, unmolested.

And thou in thy noontide beauty art still
 Like an angel's eyeball gleaming,
 As o'er thy cheek in a tiny rill
 The dews of heaven are streaming.

A tear-drop moistened thy lovely dye,
 While feelingly I hung o'er thee,
 And another stole down as I thought that the eye
 Of the bard may've bedewed thee before me.

Thou lookest as thou thyself did heave
 With a tide of heavenly feeling,
 So soft, so tender, as sad to leave
 Thy holy and long-hallow'd dwelling.

DESCRIPTION OF A MOONLIGHT NIGHT IN AUTUMN

(From "The Retrospect," Canto I.)

When woods would shower their foliage and the wave
 Roll dark with summer's beauty, forth we'd stray
 O'er rustling ruin to some lonely cave,
 And pass with pleasing themes the night away;
 Or, tracing by the moon's romantic ray,
 The undiscovered charms of haunted scene,
 Where down the woodlands grey declivity
 Hurl'd the dear gliding brook that elves did screen
 With curving underwood to lave their limbs unseen.

Forever lovely thy deep thoughtful hue
 Soft autumn eve; these clouds thy spirit fair,
 Like necromantic chariots posting through
 The blue expanse in life and beauty; there
 Serpents seem billowing forth with speckled glare;
 Here a huge mammoth rests upon the snow
 Above, and belches down abrupt through air,
 A burning fire-flood to the plain below,
 And o'er an azure deep, where little skiffs float slow.

Here towers a golden statue, borne in air
 By pebbly rocks and poised by gentlest wind;
 There witch-forms scamper 'mongst the moonbeams fair,
 Or sail along on hills, their charms unbind,
 As they withdraw, relaxing, like the hind,
 In overseer's wished absence, or removed,
 An army from its leader; now reclined
 On the horizon hills; and now, unmoved,
 Unnerved, the cold, pale moon, less lovely, yet beloved.

As lovers lingering in each other's sight,
 They move apart, more fixed the fettered eye!
 As Bard the eagle in its upward flight
 Surveys, through air, cleft clouds, and yielding sky;
 As Mariner tossed on ocean, surging high,
 His bark o'erset, hails land, afar unfurl'd:
 Thus greet we these fair forms, and still descry
 Enchantment there—live emblem of the world!
 Passion and poesy by fits to madness whirled.

Though fettered to the spot we life begin,
 We live, and die—the world unknown by sight—
 The beauty and sublimity therein;
 And though our hearts ne'er heaved on Alpine height,
 Nor sailed on iceberg through the Polar night,
 Oh! deem not thou, aloft where fortune shines,
 Our day-spring darkness, our enjoyments slight,—
 'Mid lovelier, loftier scenes the Bard reclines—
 These dread stupendous forms his Alps and Appenines.

Kind Heaven to reimburse the shackled limb,
 A world of wonders at our feet lets fall;
 As is the light that gilds them as they skim—
 As is the hand that shaped them—seen by all—
 Obsequious still to fancy's forming call,
 The pleasure-ground of Poet's boundless home!
 Spirit of thunder! and the lightning's pall!
 When dark from ocean's bed, abroad ye roam,
 With half its waters drenched, o'er earth to fret and foam.

Spring's verdure fades, and Summer's flow'rets die!
 Yet never—Nature still keeps watch o'er you,
 Ministrant delegates of the Most High!
 Still masked with joy and gratulation due,
 Whate'er your embassy, or form, or hue,
 To few a blessing, and to all a bane,
 Who may avow? Ye seek not to undo
 Existence, but primeval life maintain;
 Hope, love, and mercy bear these fire-bolts o'er the plain.

Again ye roll in beauty, and again
 My soul mounts onward with you, as 'twould melt
 Into your essence. Who might him arraign,
 Whose more than childhood o'er such beauty knelt;
 Who would not reckon that the spirit dwelt
 Of Poesy within you:—What so grand
 Of all that brightest genius ever felt,
 And breathed upon the world in whisper bland,
 Or loud as ocean's roar against the rocky strand?

That broken circle of huge forms abrupt,
 Now most resemble thy infernal band,
 Creative Milton! When with lightnings whipp'd
 Through hell's unfathomed gulf, they wait command
 The Arch-fiend rears aloft his snaky brand!
 Now, in array of battle, up the steep
 Of heaven they rush, as nought might them withstand;
 Save one on whose dark front sits anguish deep—
 And now he lags behind and now begins to weep.

'Tis divination! round the silvery moon
 Transformed are all—this, grown the dome august
 Of Monarch on whose head is placed a crown—
 And that, an old tower mouldering into dust,
 Its brazen portals mantled o'er with rust—
 Who seemed the mightiest towered most high, now shrinks
 Into a cascade—curiously embossed.
 Its waters, as the moon upon it blinks—
 But one, of form unchanged, that from the current drinks.

* * * * *

ADDRESS TO POVERTY.

(From "The Retrospect.")

Stern poverty! how heavy and how hard—
 The struggling heart down-pressing even to death—
 Thou lay'st thy icy fingers on the Bard—
 Thy daggers, poesy did first unsheath,
 Transfix, pale heaving Hope at every breath;
 No voice to soothe—of all the world even one
 Were bliss; by early friends now deemed beneath
 Their high-flown love, their kind consoling gone—
 'Mid the still black'ning storm, unsheltered and alone.

Before thy freezing breath we shrink afar,
 And when removed, to stand or fly we pause.
 Thou roll'st upon us like the rush of war,
 And down we sink in Ruin's earthquake jaws;
 And, since ourselves have been the bitter cause,
 No arm to aid, no eye to pity near;
 And what in happier life might find applause
 Brings but the rude reproach and vulgar sneer,
 To blight the bleeding heart, and sharpen doom severe.

Shower on me all thy plagues! yet not aghast
 Will I sink underneath thee! the wild wave
 Shall sleep beneath thee—tower o'er-setting blast—
 Or ere I sink before thee to a slave,
 Or bend beneath thee to a timeless grave:
 Creation fails not with the bright days gone;
 Fair flow'rs outlive the spring; and in its cave
 The diamond wars with darkness ripening on;
 The tree stands, and thus I, in bloom, 'mid winter lone.

LINES ON SEEING A LOCK OF THE HAIR OF "HIGHLAND MARY."

Key of Remembrance! ringlet of the heart!
 In mine thou'rt treasured, never to depart.
 Thou bring'st to view the maze, with all its turns—
 The shade and sunshine in the lot of Burns;
 Of hue immortal, blightless as the maid,
 That once thou didst adorn, delightful braid!

Oft hast thou shaded the Bard's burning cheek
 When all the world of love he could not speak
 Rushed in one fervent sigh; for either heart
 Intensely throbbed—too warm to meet or part.
 Thou speak'st of love more strong than aught below!
 Thou tell'st a tale of song-born bliss and woe!
 Though, ere I saw or pressed thee, oft and long
 I've wept o'er the great Minstrel's sweetest song.
 O! not till Time himself with age grow gray
 Shall be forgotten that soul-melting lay.
 "Sweet Highland Mary!" and, thou lovely gem!
 Hang'st o'er it like a witch-wove diadem;
 And still thy glossy hue the soul shall steep
 In love, and cause even Envy's self to weep!

TO COILA.

Coila! thou nurse of the mighty, stern-beaming!
 On, in thy pride, like a wild swelling wave;
 Hie to the hill where the broad-swords are gleaming—
 The blent life-blood streaming of freeman and slave!
 Clydesdale has crossed the heath;
 Avondale, out of breath,
 Has girt on her armour and hied her away;
 Cuninghame's banners wave,
 Galloway wields the glaive,
 Panting with Wallace to join in the fray.
 Thou art up, thou art gone, like the roe of the mountain;
 Woe, woe to the files of yon bright battle wold,
 That thine arm hath encountered, high heaving the fountain
 Of blood down the heathy declivity rolled;
 O'er the dread spangled fray,
 Freedom that mangled lay,
 Lifts her sunk eye, like a star of the night,
 Re-sinews the hoary,
 Fires youth with fresh glory,
 Enthroned on thy scimitar, Wallace the wight!

THE WRECKED MARINER.

Stay, proud bird of the shore!
 Carry my last breath with thee to the cliff,
 Where waits our shattered skiff,
 One that shall mark nor it nor lover more.

Fan with thy plumage bright,
 Her heaving heart to rest as thou dost mine;
 And, gently to divine
 The tearful tale, flap out her beacon light.

Again swoop out to sea,
 With lone and lingering wail—then lay thy head,
 As thou thyself wert dead,
 Upon her breast, that she may weep for me.

Now, let her bid false Hope
 For ever hide her beam, nor trust again
 The peace-bereaving strain—
 Life has, but still far hence, choice flowers to crop.

Oh! bid not her repine,
 And deem my loss too bitter to be borne,
 Yet all of passion scorn,
 But the mild, deepening memory of mine.

Thou art away! sweet wind,
 Bear the last trickling tear-drop on thy wing,
 And o'er her bosom fling
 The love-fraught pearly shower, till rest it find!



JOHN G. INGRAM.

John G. Ingram, whose father was a forester on Barskimming estate, early showed an aptitude for the fine arts of poesy and painting. The originator of a drawing school in Kilmar-nock, he was for a time very successful as an art teacher, but his social inclinations led him to neglect his profession, which gradually began to decline, and in the end he removed to Cumnock, then the centre of the snuffbox-making industry, where he found profitable employment in painting and decorating fancy boxes. Some of Ingram's poems were of sufficient merit to gain a place in "Tait's Edinburgh Magazine." After the publication of his collected poems in book form it would appear that the poet laid aside the lyre, fell into a more or less misanthropic mood, and became in a manner dead to the world. "Sorrow's crown of sorrow is remembering happier days," and there is a wail of oppressive sadness in the bard's retrospective piece entitled—

THE DAYS OF OTHER YEARS.

Oh! the days of other years,
 When the heart, the heart, was young,
 Ere the eye has dimmed with sorrow's tears,
 Or grief flow'd from the tongue.

How lovely seemed creation then,
 By mountain, stream, and plain:
 O might I see as once I saw,
 And be a child again!

Where are the glowing visions
 I had in life's fair spring?
 The radiant dreams of childhood
 All, all have taken wing.

Does the stream glide on as softly
 By my father's dwelling lone?
 Yes, Nature's beauty still remains,
 But the child's pure heart is gone.

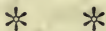
Once more I see the river
 Gliding on its gladsome way;
 Do the branches o'er it quiver
 As they did in life's young day?

Where are the happy faces
 That oft beside the stream
 I met ere care had shaded
 The light of life's young dream?

Alas! they're all departed,
 And that once joyful scene
 I should gaze on broken-hearted
 With the thoughts of what hath been.

And where, where is the maiden,
 The light of whose dark eyes,
 Caused dreams of blissful Eden
 In my young heart to arise?

Why thus doth retrospection
 Wake thoughts of fearful pain?
 God! what is our affection?
 Would I were a child again.



REV. DR HAMILTON MACGILL.

A pulpit orator of much power and persuasion, the Rev. Dr Hamilton MacGill wielded a wide influence in the ministry of the churches to which he gave his lifelong services. After a successful college career, he received three calls almost simultaneous, deciding to accept the pastorate of a Glasgow church, where he ministered successfully for many years; but on being chosen by the Synod to fill the appointment of Home and Foreign Secretary he demitted his charge and removed to Edinburgh. Failing health eventually caused him to seek entire rest, and with this purpose in view he retired to the south of France, only to live a few weeks from the time of his arrival there.

Dr MacGill was born in the village of Catrine, in the parish of Sorn. His poetical studies comprise English translations from the Latin hymnology, besides original poems and songs. He filled for a time the editorial chair of the "Juvenile Missionary Magazine."

SIR DOUGLAS MACLAGAN.

Sir Douglas MacLagan was well known at one time in medico-professional circles as a physician of the highest abilities, and among a select circle of friends as a poet of considerable merit. He was born in Ayr, but removed with his parents in early life to Edinburgh, where he was trained for the medical profession, and ultimately established a lucrative practice. He had many honours bestowed upon him, being elected a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons and Professor of Materia Medica in the Extra Academical Medical School. In 1862 he succeeded Dr Traill as Professor of Medical Jurisprudence in Edinburgh University, and in 1886 received the honour of Knighthood, in recognition of his valuable services to the medical profession. Sir Douglas resigned his Professorship in 1896—the year of his death.

His literary work comprises valuable articles to medical journals as well as occasional excursions into the realms of poesy. His muse is most successful in the homely Doric, of which the following may be taken as a fair specimen:—

MY GRAN'SON.

A blessin' on your sleekit pow,
 My lauchin', chubby-cheekit Oe!
 Fu' blythe I am to see you grow
 Sae fine a wean;
 After a towmond's gane, I trow,
 Yese walk your lane.

E'en noo I like to see ye ettle,
 I'm proud ye show some spunk an' mettle,
 Tho' walkin's just a thocht owre kittle
 As yet for you;
 An' maistly wi' a plump ye settle—
 We'se no say hoo.

Noo owre a buffet stool ye rum'le,
 Syne owre yer mither's fit ye tum'le,
 An' aft ye try to rise but whummel
 An' fa' as aft;
 But neither need to greet nor grum'le,
 Ye fa' sae saft.

Troth, Providence tak's unco pains
 In keepin' scaith frae cats an' weans;
 Hoo they get aff wi' unbrizzed banes
 Beats me to tell.
 They fa', but arena scarted ance
 For ten they fell.

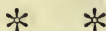
You're safest creepin' on the floor,
 Ye ha'e less chance yer heid to clour;
 It's true it blacks yer han's wi' stour,
 An' fyles yer duds,
 But that'll men' wi' water cure
 An' gude sape-suds.

Yer faither's or yer mither's han'
 'Ill help ye best to walk or stan'—
 Look up to them, it's God's comman'—
 The first wi' promise,
 An' wha minds this, be't wean or man,
 Reward 'll no miss.

There's mony a man, gin tales be true,
 Could gi'e a lesson gude to you,
 Wha never wad ha'e had to rue
 A life o' ill,
 Gin he had had the sense to do
 His faither's will.

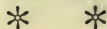
This day ye are a twalmonth auld,
 Guid grant that ye grow stout an' yauld,
 Baith strang o' limb an' braid o' spauld,
 An' may kind Heaven
 Keep ye, when in the mools I'm cauld,
 Lang 'mang the leevin'.

Nae doot ye noo are lying cosy
 Within yer crib, wi' haffets rosy,
 An' wee fat airms an' fatter bosie;
 Oh could I kiss ye!
 But far awa' gran'father owes ye
 This prayer—"God bless ye!"



Rev. PETER MEARNS.

Peter Mearns was born at Glenconner, Ochiltree, but at an early age removed, along with his parents, to Auldhouseburn, in the parish of Muirkirk, where he was schooled in the three R's. He afterwards proceeded to the University of Glasgow, studied for the ministry, and in 1846 was ordained colleague and successor to Dr Adam Thomson, Coldstream, ultimately becoming senior minister of the West United Presbyterian Church there. He is the author of a book of poems and several prose works, noticed in our bibliographical index.



MARION MACPHAIL (The Blind Poetess).

Marion Macphail was born at Dundonald of humble but industrious parents. In early life she contracted a disease from which she recovered, but at the cost of her eyesight, the loss of which made her after-life one of unusual distress and suffering. Thenceforth her song was that of Janet Hamilton:—

Nae mair, alas! nae mair I'll see
 Young mornin's gowden hair
 Spread ower the lift the dawning sheen
 O' simmer mornin' fair.

As she advanced in years deafness and lameness added to her already heavy affliction, and to stir up an interest in her forlorn condition Mr Murchland of Irvine published a small volume of her poetical musings, which are pleasing more on account of their childlike simplicity and trustfulness than for any originality of thought or expression.

EVENING THOUGHTS.

I lay me down to quiet rest
 Depending on Thy care:
 O, through the silent darkness keep
 My soul from every snare.

Thou knowest Lord I am but clay,
 Refresh my weary frame:
 And, if I'm spared to see the day,
 I'll glorify Thy name.

And may my rest in thee be sweet,
 My dreams be dreams of heaven,
 My heart, my life, my every thought,
 To Thee O Lord be given.

JESUS.

He is my shepherd, husband, friend,
 The Saviour I adore,
 Who by His daily providence
 Hath made my cup run o'er.

He is my light and hearing, too,
 My bright, my morning star;
 And by the glory of His light
 I see my home afar.

For this is not my resting place
 When earthly days are done:
 There is a home prepared for me
 Beyond both star and sun.

Lord, when at last my hour is come
 To leave this world of strife,
 O take my feeble, dying hand
 And lead me into life.



MARY MAXWELL CAMPBELL.

The muse of Mary Maxwell Campbell, fifth daughter of Dugald John Campbell of Skerrington, in the parish of Cumnock, could "awake to ecstasy the living lyre" with a skill and freedom that proclaims her a true poetess. Humble, unassuming, and beautiful, she was the favourite of all who knew her, and she endeared herself especially to the young, for whom she composed a series of poems entitled "Songs for Children." As authoress of "The March of the Cameron Men" and "Lament for Glencoe" she is entitled to a high place among the fair minstrels of Scotland. A gifted musician as well as a poetess, she composed the music set to some of her own pieces, including the martial song and the "Lament" above mentioned.

Miss Campbell held so humble an opinion of her own poetical gifts that it was only in consequence of the "March of the Cameron Men" being more than once assigned to others that she was induced to acknowledge the authorship.

During her later years she resided in St. Andrews with her only surviving sister, and while there did much good Christian work in connection with the Church to which she belonged.

THE MARCH OF THE CAMERON MEN.

There is many a man of the Cameron Clan
 That has followed his chief to the field,
 That has sworn to support him or die by his side,
 For a Cameron never can yield.
 I hear the pibroch sounding, sounding
 Deep o'er the mountain and glen,
 While light-springing footsteps are trampling the heath—
 'Tis the march of the Cameron men.

Oh, proudly they march, but each Cameron knows
 He may tread on the heather no more;
 But boldly he follows his chief to the field,
 Where his laurels were gathered before.
 I hear the pibroch sounding, sounding
 Deep o'er the mountain and glen,
 While light-springing footsteps are trampling the heath—
 'Tis the march of the Cameron men.

The moon has arisen, it shines on that path
 Now trod by the gallant and true—
 High, high are their hopes, for their chieftain has said
 That whatever men dare they can do.
 I hear the pibroch sounding, sounding
 Deep o'er the mountain and glen,
 While light-springing footsteps are trampling the heath—
 'Tis the march of the Cameron men.

LAMENT FOR GLENCOE.

Ye loyal Macdonalds, awaken! awaken!
 Why sleep ye so soundly in face of the foe,
 The clouds pass away and the morning is breaking,
 But when will awaken the sons of Glencoe!
 They lay down to rest with their thoughts on the morrow,
 Nor dreamt that life's visions were melting like snow,
 But daylight has dawned on the silence of sorrow,
 And ne'er shall awaken the sons of Glencoe.

Oh, dark was the moment that brought to our shieling
 The black-hearted foe with his treacherous smile;
 We gave him our food with a brother's own feeling,
 For then we believed there was truth in Argyle.
 The winds howl a warning, the red lightning flashes,
 We heap up our fagots a welcome to show,
 But traitors are brooding on death near the ashes,
 How cold on the hearths of the sons of Glencoe.

My clansmen strike boldly—let none of you count on
 The mercy of cowards, who wrought us such woe;
 The wail of their spirits when heard on the mountain
 Must surely awaken the sons of Glencoe.
 Ah, cruel as adders! ye stung them while sleeping;
 But vengeance shall track ye wherever ye go;
 Our loved ones lie murdered—no sorrow nor weeping
 Shall ever awaken the sons of Glencoe.

As a specimen of Miss Campbell's muse in lighter and
 more playful mood we call out

THE MOLE AND THE BAT.

My friend is a Mole, and I am a Bat,
 Two travellers are we;
 And we have gone o'er the wide, wide world
 To see what we could see.
 But the Mole and I came back again,
 And both of us agree
 That there's no place in all the world
 So good as our countrie.

And first we went to merry France,
 Where the sun shines warm and bright;
 But frogs to eat were no great treat,
 So we only stayed a night.
 So the Mole and I came back again, etc.

And next we went to Holland,
But 'twas far too damp for me;
'Twas all as flat as the crown of your hat,
And nothing could we see.
So the Mole and I came back again, etc.

We then set off to Germany,
Where they made us understand
That they smoked their pipe and drank their beer
For the good of their Fatherland.
So the Mole and I came back again, etc.

We went to Spain and Portugal
And thought them pretty places;
But 'twould appear that water's dear,
For they never wash their faces.
So the Mole and I came back again, etc.

Oh! then we came to Italy,
Where beggars swarm like bees;
The Mole had to work like any Turk
While they sat at their ease.
So the Mole and I came back again, etc.

Then we went off to Austria,
Where, much to our surprise,
They tried to shut us up for life,
And call'd us English spies.
So the Mole and I came back again, etc.

And next we got to Russia,
Where we tried to look about;
But we chanced to stare at the Russian Bear,
And he order'd us the knout.
So the Mole and I came back again, etc.

We started off to America,
The land of the Free and the Brave;
But they said the Mole was as black as coal,
And they'd sell him for a slave.
So the Mole and I came back again, etc.

We travelled off to Africa,
To see a wondrous lake;
But turned our tail and made all sail
When we met a rattlesnake.
So the Mole and I came back again, etc.

Then last we went to Scotland,
Where we met some pleasant fellows,
But every one wore waterproofs
And carried large umbrellas.
So the Mole and I came back again,
And satisfied are we
That there's no place in all the world
So good as our countrie.

JOHN M'LATCHIE.

John M'Latchie, who dated a volume of his poems at Whiteletts, 1897, was born in Newton-upon-Ayr, and worked when a lad in a nursery, but was subsequently apprenticed to the shoe-making trade. He lived to the advanced age of eighty-five years. His book of poems was published some seven years or so before he died. The chief poem in this work rejoices in the somewhat taking title of "Fancy on the Rove." It is rather an ambitious effort, and is written in five cantos.

Of the shorter pieces, that entitled "Poverty Raw" is one of Mr M'Latchie's happiest efforts:

POVERTY RAW.

I stood by the wayside where crowds passed by,
I looked upon this ane, and that ane did spy:
There were some bien and braw, ithers ragged and bare,
And what mak's the niffer, I said, lies somewhere.

The cause o' it a' was—I soon found it out—
The braw kept their sillar, the poor did it tout,
Till the pub and the landlord they maistly got a',
And noo they are livin' in Poverty Raw.

There passed by me crowds o' wee chitt'rin' weans,
Nae claes on their backs and nae flesh on their banes,
And aye when I spiered whaur they lived they said, "Oh!
We live at a place they ca' Poverty Raw."

"When faither kept sober and aye on his feet
We then had guid claes and plenty o' meat;
Noo faither drinks whisky an' mither an' a',
And that's why we're livin' in Poverty Raw."

If that is the case, says I to mysel',
It tak's little sense the richt way to tell;
The best way is never to taste it ava,
And ne'er be a tenant in Poverty Raw.



ADAM BROWN TODD.

Of the fewest number can it be said they have spent more than fourscore years in the harness of a busy manual and intellectual life. Mr Adam Brown Todd is one of this rare class, it being upwards of eighty years since he first saw the light at Craighall, in the parish of Mauchline. His parents

removing to Sorn, the lad was there sent to school. His schooldays, however, were of brief duration, and as soon as they were over he was engaged by a neighbouring farmer to herd cattle, and afterwards spent a few years on the farms of Castlehill and Burnhouses, where he gained much knowledge of agriculture and general farm work. A new sphere was eventually opened up to him, when his parents removed with their family to Low Molmont, near Galston, for in this district there chanced then to be a good trade done in field-drain tile-making, and the lad was sent first to Galston and afterwards to Newmilns to learn the trade.

When attending to his farm duties he neglected no opportunity of reading every book that fell into his hands, and in Newmilns he continued his book studies and attended a course of lectures on geology by the Rev. Norman MacLeod, who was then minister of the parish. About this time "Holy Fairs," as they were styled by Burns, were still common in Ayrshire, and Mr Todd attended them frequently, but (in his own words) "never saw anything but the best behaviour at these largely-attended meetings." Perhaps the satirical lash of Burns helped to purge these functions of their grosser parts and make them more becoming the manners of modern times. In 1843 Mr Todd severed his connection with Galston and Newmilns, and removed to a tile-work in the parish of Whithorn, where he remained as manager for about a year, afterwards transferring his services to a tile-maker in the hill-country of New Cumnock. He soon afterwards engaged in a tile-making business of his own near Cumnock, and was also associated with his brother-in-law in an extensive work of the same kind at Dalquharran, near Straiton. For a time the business prospered in his hands, but a reverse happening, Mr Todd resigned his lease and abandoned the business, removing ultimately to Old Cumnock, where the greater part of his literary work has been accomplished.

In October, 1903, he was entertained to luncheon in the Dumfries Arms, Cumnock, in celebration of his diamond jubilee as a journalist, when he was presented with an illuminated address, bountifully augmented by a bank cheque for over one hundred and sixty pounds. Mr Todd is the recipient also of an annuity from the Royal Bounty Fund.

LINES WRITTEN IN GLAISNOCK GLEN.

Sweet Glaisnock Glen, I love again,
When Spring-time is advancing,
Through thee to stray when day's last ray
Is on thy streamlets glancing.

The thrush to hear sing soft and clear,
To charm the dusky gloaming;
While nimbly fly the grey bats by
Around me in my roaming.

On dewy wing, here soaring sing
The larks, when morn is blushing;
And round the lawn where sports the fawn
The blackbird's song is gushing.

The mellow cry of cuckoo shy
Deliciously is ringing;
While rippling clear, the burnie near
Its silver tune is singing.

Fair to the sight, the primrose bright
In budding brake is gleaming—
Then comes the rose, when summer glows,
With showers of sunshine streaming.

The soft green broom, in golden bloom,
Then round the glen is glowing;
While o'er the linn, with pleasant din,
The waters bright are flowing.

At every turn the feathery fern
In fairy nook is flaunting,
While sweetest song gushes along
The glades, where birds are chanting.

In Autumn day, 'tis sweet to stray
Here, when the winds are sighing;
When saffron beams and orange gleams
Down on the woods are lying.

When mountain bee hums drowsily,
Home through the tree-tops bending;
While lovers meet, with kisses sweet,
In groves, when day is ending.

Here, coming fast, strange thoughts have passed
Across my mind in motion;
Of man's brief life, with mysteries rife,
And of that vast dim ocean

To which we glide, on Time's swift tide,
Our barks with base dross freighted;
Clear then the deck, lest wild shipwreck
Sees all our best hopes blighted.

Life's voyage past, when reached at last
The blissful hills of Heaven—
Methinks I'd sigh, at times, to fly
To this sweet glen at even,

And muse, and stray my wonted way,
When golden day is dying—
When its last light, melting in night,
Along the hills is lying.

Hear through the trees the tuneful breeze,
 Like angels sweetly singing;
 Then glide once more back to that shore
 Where golden harps are ringing.

AUGUST.

(From "The Circling Year.")

O joyous August! treasure of the year!
 I love thee, though thou tell'st of winter near.

Once more I feel myself a boy again,
 Heaping with yellow sheaves the groaning wain;
 A bright girl cooing round me like a dove,
 My heart first fluttering at the touch of love.

That sweet-toned voice e'en now I seem to hear,
 Still sounding sweeter as life's close draws near,
 Her rosy lips, bright cheek, and dimpled chin;
 Her small round mouth, with faultless teeth within;

Her raven tresses round her shining brow,
 Her bright blue eyes (they beam upon me now);
 Her heaving breast, tempting as Eden's fruit;
 Her slender waist; her small and pretty foot;
 All brought a swimming sense upon my brain,
 And made my blood career through every vein.
 A boy no more: love-lifted I began
 A new life then—in love, a full-grown man!

O! first found, deepest, all unequalled love!
 Though long our lives, and widely though we rove;
 Though beauty's fairest daughters flutter round
 The paths we tread, warming the dull, cold ground;
 The soul no more, in their bright, dazzling glow,
 Flames as when first love's pulse began to go.
 That nameless thrill it sends through all the heart
 Is ne'er forgotten, nor can quite depart.

The two pieces following, entitled "Extracts from an Unpublished Satire," will give readers an idea of our poet's powers as a descriptive writer:—

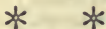
A THUNDERSTORM NEAR EDINBURGH.

Satan arose, but sudden, ere he spoke,
 Along heaven's arch the bellowing thunder broke;
 Fierce lightnings flashing fill'd the middle air,
 The mountains seemed to shudder at the glare
 Which lighten'd every cliff and craggy steep—
 Trembling they totter'd to their centres deep,
 Clouds roll'd on clouds, as flashlet follow'd flash,
 Thick fell the rain, while crash succeeded crash,
 Gilt by heaven's fires, Edina's turrets shone,
 In distant vales was seen each naked stone;

The ocean waves now beam'd like burnish'd gold,
 Now in thick gloom the crested billows roll'd;
 Now for a moment all was calm and still,
 Then in an instant whirlwinds shook the hill.

A MORNING SCENE NEAR EDINBURGH.

Far o'er the ocean break the beams of day,
 Gild the glad hills, and chase the night away;
 Bright rosy rays upon the mountains gleam,
 Glint through each grove, and glitter on each stream.
 The gloom of night now flies before the morn,
 And every murky cloud away is borne;
 A balmy breeze is stealing o'er the earth,
 Soft sunbeams call the wild-flow'rs into birth;
 Above the mountain tops glad songs are heard,
 Sung in sweet strains by morning's joyous birds.
 The blithesome lamb is bleating in the vale,
 And up the lone glen sounds the curlew's wail;
 Along the shore glad voices greet the ear,
 And gay boats bound across the billows clear;
 The horrors of the night have pass'd away,
 And peace and beauty come with coming day.



JOHN CURLE PATERSON.

John Curle Paterson was better known in his day as a journalist than a poet, although he early gave evidence of poetical talent by issuing a book of poems while yet only twenty-two years of age. While still under thirty he left his native town of Ayr and settled as a Colonial journalist in Victoria, first as reporter and afterwards as commercial editor on the staff of the "Melbourne Argus."

In 1874 he retired from the staff of the "Argus," after which he edited in succession the "Melbourne Punch," the "Geelong Advertiser," the "Hobart Mail," the "Melbourne Evening Express," the "Wellington Independent," and the "Nelson Colonist." His health broke down at length under the severe strain, and a stroke of paralysis occurred, which clouded his intellect and eventually sunk him to everlasting repose.

THE BELL'S FOUR PEALS.

(Written in Dalrymple Churchyard.)

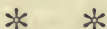
'Twas when in the dark old woods
 Was heard the bursting of the shoots—
 When Spring had sought the solitudes,
 Piping to the boughs and roots—

When Beauty from her cave upsprung,
 The Bell from out its slumber woke,
 And to the grove with willing tongue
 In merry tones of gladness spoke:
 For now the whisper came that filled
 A mother's heart with joy,
 And gentle arms received the child—
 The father's first-born boy;
 And kindly lips grew eloquent
 With wishes for his weal,
 When from the belfry, blythely sent
 Rung out the birth-day peal:
 Willing swung the tuneful tongue—
 And Hope to fit him well
 A seamless garment wove—well rung
 That dreamy birth-day bell!

Summer was on the campaign smiling—
 Flowers up-breathing incense rare—
 Music's softest sounds beguiling,
 Stealing on the list'ning air—
 Beauty blushing in the valley—
 When the Bell awoke again
 Giving mellowed sounds to dally
 In the ears of married men:
 Floral bows so gay were seen,
 Arching o'er each dusty way,
 To the light feet on the green
 Tuneful pipes spoke lustily:
 For lurking winds had heard the vow,
 Repeated what the maid would hide;
 And the wreath is on a brow—
 At the altar is a bride:
 Glibly swung the laughing tongue—
 Love struck a sounding shell—
 Strong were the hands that stoutly rung
 The gay youth's bridal bell.

But when the dreary rains came down,
 And robes of darkness draped the earth,
 And every sighing leaf was brown,
 And hush'd the village children's mirth:
 When Autumn dressed in robes of rue
 Came breathing on a doleful reed,
 And every wailing note she drew
 Lay lingering on a charmless mead:
 When Beauty pined in sun and shade,
 Oh, then the Bell broke out again—
 But not to charm the long-drawn glade,
 Oh, not to please the listening plain:
 For sadly glints a stone-marked bed,
 From out a drowsy grove of yew,
 And he whom Spring a babe-boy led,
 In Autumn lay beneath the dew.
 Unwilling swung the trembling tongue,
 Time's motley locks could tell
 One more gray hair, while faintly rung
 The spirit's passing-bell!

And Winter came, a roisterer rude,
 With heart unblessed and cold:
 The voice was silent that had wooed
 The zephyr to the wold:
 And love-forsaken Beauty died—
 And o'er her early tomb
 The night-wind for the fair maid sighed
 And filled the woods with gloom.
 The ivy to the belfry clung,
 The beam grew black and old—
 The rust o'ercame the tuneful tongue
 That tales of joy had told.
 'Twas when the grate by rust was chilled,
 The banks benumbed with rime,
 A fitful voice at midnight filled
 The weary ears of time:
 The ivy shook: the saddened tongue
 Woke one funereal knell—
 Alas by idle winds was rung
 That death-note of the Bell!



JOHN CALLAGHAN.

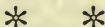
Ordinary people live for the most part a yard and three-quarters or thereby in the air with their feet firmly pressed on *terra firma*. It is reserved for poets and aeroplanists to soar away on the "uncommunicative wind" to aerial regions unknown to ordinary mortals. Not every poet has soared so far into the invisible ether as John Callaghan, the author of a little volume entitled "Mosaics, or Attempts at Rhythmic Thought." Of Mr Callaghan's life history we have been able to glean only the feeblest outline. He was of Irish descent, and received his schooling at Ayr Academy; and, notwithstanding a serious physical defect caused by a severe accident in early childhood, he succeeded in pushing himself through the University of Glasgow, thereafter taking up the dignified and honourable profession of schoolmaster, conducting for some time a private seminary in the neighbourhood of Ayr. Ultimately his school teaching graduated into the higher post of preparing students for the University.

Mr Callaghan's style has been likened to that of Browning, and although of Irish descent, he was evidently addicted to swathing his thoughts in a Scotch mist.

The following poem will give readers some idea of his "Mosaics." It is supposed to be written by a girl who has lost her lover in death.

A voice as a murmur o' stars
 Came down from the weeping sky.
 Moaned the trees; their dream o' leaves
 Heart-smote, I heard them cry:
 Worlds roll,
 Hearts break,
 Flowers laugh.

My Willie, I said, when pansies come,
 And lilies bend in prayer,
 You'd lift your darling lips to mine,
 And now, now they've left you there.
 There where pansies weep,
 There where lilies faint.
 And here, why here
 Hearts break,
 Birds sing,
 Flowers laugh.



JAMES PAUL CRAWFORD.

James Paul Crawford, who wrote under the pen-name of "Paul Rookford," was the eldest of three brothers who gained distinction in the paths of poesy. His brothers, Mungo Crawford and John Kennedy Crawford, were both talented versifiers, but did not chance to strike the same popular vein as their brother, James Paul, who as the composer of temperance songs struck a chord which vibrated in the common breast of humanity, and thus gained for himself more than passing popularity.

A native of Catrine, where his father was respected as a local poet and village orator, James Paul Crawford left the home of his childhood when only fifteen years of age, betaking himself to the great city of Glasgow, which thenceforth became the home of his adoption. For a number of years he followed the calling of a master tailor, which he subsequently abandoned, and was engaged as registrar for the parish of Govan, his connection with the Govan Parochial Board occupying some twenty years of active service. Amongst his friends and acquaintances Mr Crawford was a great favourite, being the fortunate possessor of a genial, humorous, and kindly nature, which, independent of his literary gifts, won him many good friends. His death took place at Bellahouston, Glasgow, in 1887. Mr Crawford's best known song, "The Drunkard's Raggit Wean," was, according to his own account, written one Sabbath afternoon during the service in a Glasgow church.

A wee bit raggit laddie gangs wan'er in' thro' the street,
 Wadin' 'mang the snaw wi' his wee hackit feet.
 Shiverin' i' the cauld blast, greetin' wi' the pain,
 Wha's the puir wee callan? He's the drunkard's raggit wean.

He stan's at ilka door, and he keeks wi' wistfu' e'e
 To see the crood aroun' the fire a' lauchin' loud wi' glee.
 But he daurna venture ben, tho' his heart be e'er sae fain,
 For he mauna play wi' ither bairns, the drunkard's raggit wean.

Oh, see the wee bit bairnie, his heart is unco fu',
 The sleet is blawin' cauld, and he's drookit thro' and thro'.
 He's speerin' for his mither, an' he wonners whaur she's gane,
 But oh! his mither she forgets her ain wee raggit wean.

He kens nae faither's love, an' he kens nae mither's care,
 To soothe his wee bit sorrows, or kame his tautit hair,
 To kiss him when he waukens, or smooth his bed at e'en,
 An' oh! he fears his faither's face, the drunkard's raggit wean.

Oh! pity the puir laddie, sae guileless an' sae young.
 The oath that leaves the faither's lips 'll settle on his tongue,
 An' sinfu' words his mither speaks, his infant lips 'll stain,
 For oh! there's nane to guide the bairn, the drunkard's raggit wean.

Then surely we might try and turn that sinfu' mither's heart,
 An' strive to get his faither to act a faither's part,
 An' mak' them leave the drunkard's cup, an' never taste again,
 An' cherish wi' a parent's care their puir wee raggit wean.

OUR DEAR OLD VILLAGE HOME.

Recited by the Author at the Re-union in Glasgow of the
 natives of Catrine, 6th February, 1885. (William
 Seaton, Chairman.)

Tho' warm be our homes here, dear tho' they be,
 Our hearts ever fondly turn, dear Catrine, to thee;
 Tho' far we may wander, tho' far we may roam,
 We ne'er can forget thee, our dear old village home.

Home, Home, dear old Home—
 There's no place so dear as our old village Home.

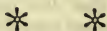
Oh Catrine! dear Catrine! so peaceful and still,
 Embower'd in the bosom of woodland and hill;
 Where'er I may wander, where'er I may be,
 Oh fondly in fancy I flee back to thee.

Home, Home, etc.

Oh couthie the auld folk, an' cheery the young,
 An' sweet is the soun' o' their auld Ayrshire tongue;
 Oh give me a seat at their ingle again,
 With warm hearts to meet me and welcome me ben!

Home, Home, etc.

Oh many and dear ones I loved are away,
 Sleep silent and sound in the auld Chapel Brae,
 And many a fond heart is far o'er the main,
 But they're all there with me when my heart dreams again
 Of Home, Home, dear old Home—
 There's no place so dear as our old village Home.



REV. JOHN ANDREW.

It does not follow that the son of a poet should be a poet any more than the son of a shoemaker should be a cobbler. It is difficult to account for the manner in which nature dispenses her gifts, and we have never been able to satisfy ourselves as to the existence of "hereditary genius." It sometimes happens, however, as in the case of the Crawford and Andrew families, that the poetic gift is transmitted from sire to son. John Andrew was born at Ochiltree, where he learned first the trade of muslin weaving, and afterwards that of tailoring. His thirst for learning dominated his business affairs, and after taking several courses of Theological training and studying classical tongues, he was ordained pastor of an Independent Church in Glasgow, transferring his services subsequently to Evangelical Union Churches in Tillicoultry, Barrhead, and Dundee. Through some reversion of theological tenets, he finally severed his connection with this body, and went over to the Catholic Apostolic Church.

Mr Andrew's verse is highly tinged with philosophical colouring, and shows a mind deeply skilled in scientific subjects. He is the author of several important philosophical works, which are mentioned in the bibliography attached to this work.

THE TWOFOLD MOVEMENT OF GOD.

In the earth God does no work
 Out of Zion not forespoken;
 What the "Wheels" shall go to do,
 The "Cherubim" foretoken—
 All the destiny of nations,
 All this rest and perturbations;
 This shall not be broken.

From Zion, where Jehovah rests,
 Where He still delights to dwell,
 He shall His testimony send,
 And the nations tell
 How they may expect their end;
 Breaking who will not attend;
 Blessing all who will.

The world's affairs are not apart
 From the fortunes of the altar;
 In all its work, and war, and art
 One purpose shall not falter.
 In the "Four" and in the "Wheels,"
 The same all-moving Spirit dwells,
 Accomplishing His purpose.

In the Four with diverse faces—
 In the Church's heavenly places—
 All who carefully do scan
 Will see "the likeness of a man."
 List! a noise is in their going,
 Like the noise of waters flowing,
 Like the tumult of the ocean,
 Like an host in martial motion..
 Oh mankind, consider Him
 Inhabiting the Cherubim.

By-and-by this work is past,
 And they enter into rest;
 What unutterable things,
 When the Four let down their wings.
 Then His judgments forth shall thunder
 And the world shall gaze and wonder.



MUNGO CRAWFORD.

It is the fewest number of bards who have been enamoured of the uncertain luxuries of a seafaring life. Still we do not think it would be inimical to the poetic fancy to experience the rousing dangers of a great storm at sea. Not having the experience, we know not what thoughts it might arouse, but we think it must have a stimulating effect on the imagination to witness the rise and fall of the tremendous Atlantic billows as the labouring steamer triumphantly ploughs its way through them, unawed by the full diapason of their threats and hisses. Mungo Crawford, a brother of James Paul Crawford, of Catrine, acquired some experience of a sea-faring life as a purser on one of the Allan Line steamers, but so far as we are aware his experience of the briny deep did not lend much colour to his verse.

On leaving the Allan Line service he settled in Kilmarnock, where he established a drapery business, which failing health in course of time compelled him to relinquish. On retiring from business he took up residence in Paisley, where he died in 1874. His verse flows in a smooth and harmonious measure, but is not marked by any great depth or subtlety of thought,

THE FATE OF A FLOWER.

A little flow'r of genus rare
 Bloom'd in a lonely glen;
 No idle stranger wandered there,
 To gaze upon its colours fair,
 Far from the haunts of men.

Within the richly sheltered spot
 It lived the summer through;
 The whistling woodman saw it not,
 When loitering homeward to his cot
 'Neath evening's sky of blue.

But Time's untiring, blighting feet
 Had chased the summer's green,
 And in the fair and castled seat
 That flourished near the flower's retreat
 Lived Britain's honoured Queen.

From royal cares and factious strife
 She sought a brief repose;
 With Scottish hearts to guard her life,
 A noble Queen, as worthy a wife—
 A pattern to her foes.

Oft when rich autumn's golden beams
 Had drank the dews away,
 She walk'd by woods and rippling streams,
 And fairy nooks, where ancient queens
 Had not the pow'r to stray.

Within the glen one sunny morn
 She spied the tiny flow'r—
 Though fading now with petals torn,
 She deem'd it worthy to be borne
 To grace the royal bower.

And, tended well with skill and care,
 It slept the winter through;
 And with the summer's balmy air
 It bloomed in brightest beauty there,
 Enchanting to the view.

* *

JOHN CRAWFORD.

The profession of teaching appears to have a certain fascination for intelligent minds, otherwise how is that so many poets have engaged in the "delightful task, to rear the tender thought, to teach the young idea how to shoot, to pour the fresh instruction on the mind, and fix the gen'rous purpose in the glowing breast?"

John Crawford, who was born at Garlieston, Cumnock, was apprenticed at an early age to the joinery trade, to which he subsequently added some knowledge of architecture. Later in life he made a study of the classics, and acquainted himself with all the best writers of English and Scottish poetry; and quitting the trade to which he was apprenticed, he took up the profession of a teacher. John Crawford's rural training made him familiar with farm life, and while occupied as a dominie he was very popular with the country people, who frequently called upon him to disburse the Muse and write humorous and satirical poems on passing events. The schoolmaster's innate modesty, however, prevented much of his verse ever reaching the printing press.

Mr Crawford was awarded the second prize for the following poem, written on the hundredth anniversary of the poet Burns:—

OMNIA POETAE SERVIUNT.

Thy heroes, Scotland, have not borne
For thee alone the flag unfurled,
They loved thee, but they coined their blood
To buy the birthright of the world.
Their deeds survive where Freedom lives;
When Truth expires their names shall die.
Unfading garlands bind their brows,
Wreathed of their own loved minstrelsy.

Thy bards—their names are doubly dear—
Through them thy triumphs are bequeathed;
But none of all thy sons of song
Beloved as Coila's holly wreathed.
The sun but gilds the eastern heights
That saw our song-chief take the field;
Nor shall its lengthening shadows fall
Till Tyranny and Error yield.

A hundred years! what memories spring;
What ashes gather to their urns
Since rose the star o'er bonny Doon
That hailed the birth of Robert Burns?
Two hundred years! What change awaits?
Our ashes shall have filled their urns—
Then still may nations hail the name
Of Scotland's glory—Robert Burns.

The poet of the labouring poor,
His mission given him from above,
He came to hallow human toil,
And preach the brotherhood of love;
The workings of that mighty heart,
Its passion writhings, who can tell,
Heaven ordered, only Heaven adjudge,
How fought the hero and how well.

The songs of Burns ! in every line
 We trace the master minstrel's hand ;
 There is a voice in all he wrote
 That speaks the speech of every land ;
 We've met him in an English blouse ;
 He fills the forests of the West ;
 He whistles in Australian mines,
 And beats in every Saxon breast.

He burst upon the stage—a man ;
 And though he left us in his prime,
 We cannot think of him as dead ;
 The thoughts of genius challenge time.
 He's with the shepherd on the hills,
 He whispers love in every glen ;
 We see him on the busy farm,
 He's living still this man of men.

The land of Burns ! we boast his birth,
 And long have owned we dealt him hard ;
 To-day her country's sense and worth
 Unite in homage of her bard :
 Unite in homage of her bard
 And ever as the circle turns
 Shall Scotland consecrate the day
 That gave the world a Robert Burns.



ARCHIBALD CAMPBELL M'MICHAEL.

Archibald Campbell M'Michael was born at South Boig, New Cumnock, and ended his days in Glasgow. He followed for some time the calling of a drainage contractor, which occupation he after a while abandoned for the more congenial business of a colporteur. Latterly he earned a somewhat precarious living from the sale of his own books, several editions of which were published during his lifetime.

The following verses are culled from a volume, entitled "Wayside Thoughts."

His poems, if they do not show much originality of thought or treatment, are nevertheless pleasing, and are characterised throughout by a high moral tone. One cannot read them without feeling a certain amount of satisfaction, and, as saith the moralist, "he is well paid that is well satisfied."

TO A POETESS.

Hail, sister spirit, fair and mild,
 That wanders where the muses dwell—
 In fancy's lonely track exiled
 With one dark thought too deep to tell.

We love thy sweet, pathetic strain,
That stirs and kindles in the heart;
Impassioned, pure, without a stain,
A flame from which we cannot part.

Did learning teach thee to adore,
To elevate, repress, refine,
And draw from Nature's varied store
Those sweet and simple truths of thine

That come, like the approach of spring,
With buds of promise bright and new,
When birds are warbling on the wing,
And joy lights on the heart like dew?

Not Hemans in her summer's bloom,
With all the flush of sunny flow'rs,
More sweetly lights us through the gloom
When cares arise and sorrow lours.

Not Browning in her eagle's flight,
Loud as the storm when thunders roll,
Awakes a stream of purer light,
Or touches nearer to the soul.

Though grand to hear the tempest blow,
We love the breeze that steals along;
Though splendid be the river's flow,
The streamlet has the sweetest song.

The soul that penetrates the mist
That clouds it in obscurity,
Inspired with thoughts that cannot rest
But fight for ever to be free.

That breaks the barrier of fate,
Untaught, unaided in the strife,
Proves something in the mind is great
And fresh and full of nature's life.

And such art thou, delightful dame;
Thy lot though humble and unknown,
Could never quench the glowing flame
That triumphed over fortune's frown.

That friends may smile upon thy path,
And higher still thy muse aspire,
Untouched by fortune's chilling breath,
I wish thee with a large desire.



JOHN KENNEDY CRAWFORD.

In our younger days the sweet village of Catrine was famed for nothing so much as its gigantic twin water-wheels, which

are a sight once seen never to be forgotten. Now-a-days, in the light of maturer years, we deem the village more famous on account of its bards and minstrels. Several of these have already been noticed in our pages, and John Kennedy Crawford adds one more to the list. He is of the same family as James Paul and Mungo Crawford, and seems to be endowed with the same facility for spinning verse, and although he has not devoted any special care to his poetic gift, he has written some pieces of considerable merit. In his lyrical piece entitled "Scottish Homes Again" there is a sprightly freshness and a picturesqueness which do great credit to his muse:—

The rocky headlands now are passed,
 And now the rising gale—
 See how it bends the yielding mast
 And fills the spreading sail:
 Away, away, the bark she flies
 Upon the boundless main,
 No more we'll rest our eager eyes
 On Scottish homes again;
 Or meet around the blazing hearth,
 Where social joy doth reign;
 Or banish care with maidens fair
 In Scottish homes again.



DAVID ANDREW.

To certain minds the acquisition of knowledge has an attraction more powerful than aught else, and although "a little learning is a dangerous thing," a sound classical education gives a person an air of superiority that cannot be gainsaid.

David Andrew, who was a younger brother by about nine years of the Rev. John Andrew, of Ochiltree, evidently had full faith in the power of learning, and quitted the trade of a handloom weaver in order to take up the study of mathematics and the classics, with a view of qualifying for the position of a teacher. After a course of training in the Free Church Normal Seminary, he obtained the post of teacher in Old Kilpatrick, and afterwards the headmastership of Renton Public School. This engagement he held for about nineteen years, when his services were transferred to Duntocher School.

The earlier efforts of Mr Andrew's muse appeared in the columns of provincial newspapers and magazines. His poetic flights are not limited to the bounds of lyrical composition, venturing at times beyond that line; but, like the majority of Scottish poets, he is happiest when he strikes the lyre on the chord of the homely Doric, as in the following piece, entitled—

OOR WEE LAMBS.

Twa are ta'en in frae the hills and the glens
 Into the lea o' the fold:
 The win' was ower snell for the lammies, wha kens—
 Oh, had they dee'd in the wold!

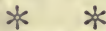
But into the lown o' His heavenly bield
 The Shepherd has ta'en them awa',
 Himsel' there the lammies to tend and to shield:
 Then why let oor tears doon fa'?

Ay, weel may ye ask why we sae sab and weep;
 I kenna, but this—it's nae sham—
 The Shepherd himsel' ance grat sair for a sheep,
 An' why mayna we for a lamb?

Sae blame na oor sorrow, an' chide na oor tears,
 Tho' deep an' tho' fast they fa',
 For the joy an' the love o' their innocent years
 Is the purest the earth ever saw.

But the twa that are ta'en are na a' that are gi'en,
 The lave we maun cosy an' feed:
 For the cauld may bite sairer than ever, I ween—
 To the lown, to the lown let us lead.

Oh, Thou wha art Shepherd in shelter an' shield,
 In the fold and on fells Thou hast flocks;
 Oh, timeously take to the heavenly fields
 Wha cower 'mang the cliffs o' the rocks.



EBENEZER SMITH.

Ebenezer Smith was born in Ayr, where in early life he gained the reputation of a versatile poet by contributing verse to the local newspapers. His gift of poesy was such that he needed not to wait upon any special occasion of joy or sorrow to set his harp-strings vibrating, for in all seasons his prolific muse seemed to throw over him the poet's brooding mantle. It does not appear, however, from his published volumes that any one poem reaches nearer to the climax of a perfect poetical composition than another, notwithstanding many of his pieces rise superior to the ordinary common garden variety of verse and do sufficient credit to his facile pen. Doubtless Mr Smith has frequently found poetry to be a pleasant recreation from the cumbrous task of cobbling boots and shoes.

“While some on earnest business bent
 Their murmuring labours ply

'Gainst graver hours that bring constraint
 To sweeten liberty;
 Some bold adventurers disdain
 The limits of their little reign,
 And unknown regions dare descry;
 Still as they run they look behind,
 They hear a voice in every wind
 And snatch a fearful joy."

And for Ebenezer Smith, the wind, the sea, the river, the dell, each had a voice calling him hither and thither when the Spirit of Poesy beckoned him into "unknown regions" there to "snatch a fearful joy."

BY THE SEA.

To me, throughout the circling year,
 Each inland lane and dell is dear;
 An ageing angler's life-long pride,
 I love the loch and river-side;
 But Heaven! ten thousand thanks to thee,
 That I was born beside the sea!

To reverent study Nature gives
 A look in everything that lives;
 True love, delight, and love can glean
 From all her works in every scene,
 But what exhaustless stores has she
 For him whose home is by the sea.

Alwheres the soul with sentient ear
 Eternal wisdom's words can hear;
 The babbling brook and forest lone
 Have themes and language all their own;
 But sages grey might bend the knee
 To learn when listening by the sea.

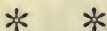
The quick, imaginative mind
 By prison walls is not confin'd;
 It forms a sanctum of the cell
 Which dulness dreads and hates as hell;
 But oh! what flights can fancy flee
 When one is wandering by the sea.

In days gone by, as child and boy,
 This sheltered beach has been my joy;
 And now to youth, with raptures rare,
 My age shall serve itself sole heir—
 Till death my dear delight 'twill be
 To watch and wander by the sea.

The riches Rothschild proudly tells
 Are here outweighed by weeds and shells;
 I'm lord of an estate as wide
 As e'er encompassed princely pride;
 And monarchs blest might envy me
 When I am wandering by the sea.

Betimes when storms loud-howling sweep
 With awful front the furious deep,
 I feel, with strain on every sense,
 The nearness of Omnipotence,
 And catch in its sublimest key
 His voice whose whisper stills the sea.

And when the glorious sunset glows,
 And wrapt in mist those hills repose;
 When winds are hush'd and waters calm,
 And rippling surf sings evening psalm,
 I join the strain, a spirit free,
 In heaven, whilst wandering by the sea.



HAMILTON NIMMO.

Were it possible to live in a world of music and poetry, free of all jarring elements and inharmonious discords, what an ideal existence it would be! The world would give itself over to enjoyment, and ask with the bards of yore—"What neat repast shall feast us, light and choice, of Attic taste with wine, whence we may rise to hear the lute well touched or artful voice warble immortal notes?"

But, alas! we must all rub shoulders with the common-places of a slaving world, and take our cuffs and blows as courageously as we can. Hamilton Nimmo, who adds another to Catrine's roll of minstrels, was the possessor of a fine tenor voice, and made a name for himself in musical circles, being besides a song writer of considerable merit. Music being the primary business of Mr Nimmo's life, he accepted in 1881 the leadership of psalmody in the Old Church, Ayr, which he held for a considerable time, and eventually resigned in order to devote his whole energies to the profession of catering for the musical public. In this line he conducted for a time a warehouse and music-publishing establishment in Ayr. The following is a fair specimen of Mr Nimmo's style:—

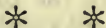
There's slippery stanes where e'er ye gang,
 In palace, hut, or ha',
 So wale your steps and no gang wrang,
 Lest owre ane ye should fa';
 For emperors and kings ha'e faun,
 And nobles by the score—
 There's aye a wee bit slippery stane
 At ilka body's door.

It's ill to haud a cup that's fou,
 I've heard my grannie say;
 Tho' siller mak's the mare to gang,
 It whiles fa's owre the brae.

Gin ye ha'e tocher, hoose, or lan',
 I beg ye no to splore—
 There's aye a wee bit slipery stane
 At ilka body's door.

If e'er you see your neebor doon,
 O dinna let him lie,
 But act the gude Samaritan
 As ye gae passin' by;
 Your neebor's case may be your ain,
 Tho' ye ha'e wealth in store;
 There's aye a wee bit slipery stane
 At ilka body's door.

"It's a lang lane that has nae turn,"
 I've heard the auld folk say;
 There's joy to get, an' sae to gi'e,
 To prosper on your way;
 An' some will fa', while others rise,
 Wha ne'er had wealth before—
 There's aye a wee bit slipery stane
 At ilka body's door.



JOHN RAMSAY REID.

Not a few of the poetical ponderings of John Ramsay Reid are marked by a prevailing pensiveness that carries the reader into the dim dreamland of retrospective imagination. Mr Reid, who many years ago gave his last good-night to the world, was born in Galston, where he got a good commercial training in the office of the Union Bank of Scotland. Promoted to Glasgow, he was for many years employed in the company's head office in Ingram Street, and subsequently was appointed agent of the Anderston branch in Glasgow.

Mr Reid's poetical enthusiasm was awakened by frequent excursions into the country, and more especially by visits to his native valley; and although his poems never were published in book form, they appeared frequently in papers and periodicals.

OH, GIVE ME BACK MY INLAND BOWERS.

Oh, give me back my inland bowers
 Where Irvine's rippling waters play:
 That I may throb my soul away
 Among the golden primrose flowers.

My listless harp, all idly strung
 Upon the stranger's dusky walls,
 Might echo through my native halls,
 Where long ago its music rung.

Sweet village home, yet dear to me,
 Thy beauty lingers evermore;
 Far from the city's surging roar—
 Amid the charms of Loudoun lea.

The roll of mimic thunder swells
 Along the hot and dusty street,
 Where aching hearts with weary beat,
 Sigh for the green of verdant dells.

Oh, for one tranquil hour to rest,
 Where flushing blooms of hawthorn snow
 Seem burning in the dying glow
 Of sunset splendour o'er the west.

Then would I pour a plaintive strain,
 Sweet as the virgin breath of June;
 With bosom kindled all atune,
 And feel my early joys again.

Rough is the path to fair renown—
 The boldest spirit oft must fret
 In vaulted glooms of care beset,
 Till through the darkness gleams the crown.

Then let me seek my inland bowers
 Where Irvine's rippling waters play;
 That I may sing through all the day
 Among the golden primrose flowers.

TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF ROBERT REID,

Late of the Scots Greys. Died 1866.

Ye gallant Greys! brave, gallant Greys!
 Who charged, with death, at Waterloo.
 So terrible amid the blaze
 Of war and carnage-clotted dew:
 Few of thy daring hearts now beat,
 Which throbbed so high in days of yore,
 As England's proud, unrivalled fleet
 Weighed anchor on thy native shore.

But yesterday I marked a grave,
 Within the village burial-ground,
 Receive one of thy gallant brave,
 Devoid of pomp and bugle sound—
 One who had cheered amid the throng,
 And felt the point of Gallia's lance:
 Who broke the square and raised the song
 Of triumph 'gainst the might of France.

How strange! methought to see him laid
 In such a sweet and hallowed spot,
 Where neither drum nor broken blade,
 Nor banner torn with foemen's shot,

Had strewn the ground, while many a form
 Of comrade dust on gory plain
 Lay lifeless 'neath the Tyrant's storm,
 Who hoped to meet their loves again.

A lonely sentry on his rounds
 (Ere Brunswick's chief had boded woe)
 He paced, and caught the troubled sounds
 Of mutter'd thunder come and go.
 He mounted with the Scottish lads
 In gallant pomp, and rode away
 Where hardy squares of Highland blades
 Stood, rooted tigers in the fray.

Stern was the music of that hour
 To many a Scottish mountaineer,
 Who lately left his native bower
 To die for British glory here.
 The bivouac fire—a weeping sky,—
 The muffled cloak—their charger's flank,—
 Were all the welcome comforts nigh
 As weary soldiers cheerless sank.

Ye gallant Greys! brave, gallant Greys
 With Wellington at Waterloo,
 Well have you earned your country's bays
 In laurelled beauty ever new.
 And he, too, now in dreamless sleep—
 A soldier with unspotted name,
 Will often bid affection weep,
 And triumph in his hero fame.

I'M GOING HOME TO DIE.

(Lines written on seeing a young man in consumption driven
 home in a cab.)

A long farewell, a last farewell, to yonder city's gloom,
 I tread a march, a sickly march, to fill an early tomb;
 Love's beacon light, on memory's page, draws from me many a
 sigh.
 Ah me! so soon the death-eclipse—I'm going home to die.

The poet's dream—the merry dream of life's young summer morn,
 When all is gay as linnet's lay, within the flow'ring thorn—
 Sweeps o'er me now, and dims with tears this once glad, lightsome
 eye;
 The scene but pains my sinking heart—I'm going home to die.

The burnie through the hazel dell seems crooning in the light,
 Where warblers mix their notes by day, and nestle all the night;
 The bleating lambs on every knove pour out their plaintive cry,
 As if they felt with pity stung—I'm going home to die.

Along those rugged, bushy braes, where trailing tendrils creep,
I've lain me down in early times to mark the waters leap,
And then would climb thy birken slopes to chase the silver fly;
But soon this weary day will close—I'm going home to die.

Ah! who will still the troubled deeps that well from every spring
Of home's affections, sound and strong, of purest golden ring?
Ah! who will soothe love's bleeding heart, or stem her dewy eye,
When once this burning brow is cold?—I'm going home to die.

I breathe the notes of speechless grief, for sounds I would not hear,
But friendship, with her wailing troop, will shed the idle tear;
And comrades beckon, as I flit in broken anguish by,
To wave their last farewell to one now going home to die.



ANTHONY CUNNINGHAM M'BRIDE.

The passion that produces good poetry in the mind of one individual may act differently on that of another, and instead of winning him to wield the pen, may persuade him to handle the pencil or brush. Some persons are endowed with a talent for both sister arts, and to this class belonged Anthony Cunningham M'Bride, a native of Monkton, who began the toils of life by learning to draft muslin designs under the direction of Alexander Smith, the poet and essayist.

Mr M'Bride, from being a muslin designer drifted into the service of the Government Ordnance Survey, where he remained two years, afterwards entering as an apprentice the office of a lithographic artist. After working five years as a journeyman lithographer in Newcastle-on-Tyne, he returned to Scotland and engaged with Messrs T. Nelson & Son, the well-known publishers, as an illustrator of books. Our poet-artist was a nephew of Allan Cunningham, the biographer of Robert Burns. He reached the desired haven of all good souls while yet in the bloom of manhood.

"Life's easel glows in light and air
When hearts and hands are busy there,
Linked in a true relation.
Alas! the shadows of the night
Descend upon the colours bright,
Death brings his pall and hides from sight
The fine creation."

Like not a few of our Ayrshire bards, A. C. M'Bride excels in vernacular verse, but we are not aware if his muse has produced anything to equal the efforts of his kinsman, the "Honest Allan."

GILLIE DHU DHIA.

(The Black Messenger of God.)

I' the' wa'-gang o' gloamin', at my yett yestreen,
 The Gillie Dhu lichted an 'tirl'd fu' lang;
 An' brawly I ettled his message did mean,
 Sae I snodded my saul wi' the Gillie to gang.
 But the Gillie o' God gart my heart throb sair
 When he sheuk his heid and gied me to ken
 That it wasna for me that he had come there;
 My time wasna come, and I e'en said Amen.

Oh! I coost a glint to his wings o' gloom,
 As the Gillie gaed oot frae my hallan door.
 Oh! I coost a glint to the cradle toom,
 And my heart was joy-toom'd for evermore!
 My bonnie we Oe was the ae only link
 That held my heart here frae my hame on heich,
 And the eerie mirk cam' wi' the ootgaun blink,
 That I couldna see yont frae the Here to abeich.

The warld was toom'd o' the lives o' my kin,
 And I grat and prayed meikle in strang despair;
 But his lug wasna deaf, nor his tentie e'e blin',
 And thus was I answered my wearisome prayer—
 "Auld carlin o' auchty winters and three,
 Quat your wud yaumrin', hae patience and faith,
 Byde ye your time, and dicht your blurr'd e'e,
 When you're ripe I'll send for ye my Gillie Dhu—Death."

Oh! it's dowie to bide wi' the fremmit ahint,
 When oor lo'ed anes afore await us at hame;
 And the warld is cauld and the pleasures in't
 Are werch and fushionless, gawkit and tame.
 For my saul langs fu' sair to flee awa' frae 't,
 Like the lav'rock in joy to the far shining stars.
 Oh! come Gillie Dhu, thy tryst I await,
 To free me frae life's prison locks, bolts, and bars.

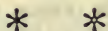
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THE REV. JOHN GARDINER.

In every parish of Scotland the bard enwrap't in pensive mood has poured the strain and tuned his artless lyre, but we venture to think that the parish of Ayr has been more prolific of poets than many others of equal size. The Rev. John Gardiner adds another to the long roll of minor minstrels hailing from the "ancient burgh toon" made famous by the Bard of Alloway. After being some time in the employment of an Evangelistic Society in Glasgow, Mr Gardiner entered the University and Free Church Divinity Hall, and was in due course

licensed as a preacher of the Gospel. Soon after being licensed he went out to Australia, where he held a charge for about four years, which failing health ultimately induced him to demit, and make his way back to the mother country.

Returning to Glasgow he was appointed Chaplain to the Barnhill Poorhouse and Hospital.



ROBERT MACKENZIE FISHER.

Robert Mackenzie Fisher, a native of Prestwick, cannot be classed as a creative poet, although he has published several volumes of verse of an unpretentious kind. In early manhood Mr Fisher was apprenticed to the weaving trade, and afterwards gained some experience of farm work. From the farm-yard he went to the shipyard, and was for a time engaged as a shipwright. Subsequently he emigrated to Africa, and on returning some years ago to his native country engaged in business as a bookseller, first in Dumfries and afterwards in his native town. While residing in Dumfries he joined the membership of Dumfries and Galloway Antiquarian Society. His literary work includes prose sketches as well as verse.



ALEXANDER STEWART.

Men of humour are in most cases men of genius. Pathos and humour both being strong in Mr Alexander Stewart's nature, it may be assumed that he is more or less of a genius. Mr Stewart was born in Galston, where he was apprenticed to the handloom weaving trade, but left his native town in early life, as the ambition grew strong within him to see more of the world and its manifold mysteries. The calling which he adopted was that of a book deliverer, and in this connection he travelled the north of Wales, the Border Counties of Scotland, and part of Ireland, laying in stores of experience which proved useful to him in after years. He found not his true calling, however, until he engaged in the work of a Congregational Missionary, his spheres of labour in this vocation embracing Manchester, Birkenhead, Oporto, and Glasgow in succession. In these centres of population he has laboured upwards of thirty-six years, and has often been brought face to face with the miseries falling to the lot of them that are "condemned in paths of

penury to roam." His deep and wide experience of human life in its many-sidedness has enabled him to memorize a fund of anecdote, which makes him a choice companion by the ingle-side, on the seashore, on the heather hills of Scotia, or on the "Slopes of Helicon."

Mr Stewart has been wont to touch the lyre from his boyhood years, singing life's hopes, its joys and sorrows, as only a true poet can. His poems exhibit a clear, restrained, and polished style, his most ambitious effort being a poem in blank verse entitled "The Problems of Life," and in it he has embodied some of his finest thoughts. Although a lover of the rural shade, 'tis rather

"Amid the toiling throng of men
He finds the food and sustenance of song,
Spread by hidden hands again and yet again;
Where'er he goes by crowded city street
He fares through springing fancies sad and sweet."

STANZAS ON THE HARP OF LADY FLORA HASTINGS

In the music-room of Loudoun Castle we were shown the harp of Lady Flora Hastings, some of its strings broken. I put my fingers among the remaining ones to sound them, but was requested by the housekeeper "not to touch it, as it had never been played upon since Lady Flora died." (Author's Note.)

Harp of the beautiful! whose fame
Untarnished gleams on Virtue's shrine.
Lone harp of Flora! sweetest name
In Loudoun's long ancestral line.

Harp of the queenly! whose bright star,
So full of promise, glisten'd fair,
Till hid from view—too soon by far—
It set 'mid clouds of grief and care.

Harp of the good and true! no more
Her fingers sound thy broken wires;
The song is hushed, the banquet o'er,
And quenched the spirit's living fires.

Full many a time those halls have rung
With the gay tones of love and mirth,
While hearts have heaved and lips have sung,
Now cold and silent in the earth.

Then beauty trod the mazy dance,
While music swelled from lute and lyre,
And chivalry, with ardent glance,
Returned the look of fond desire.

Then, harp of Loudoun, would thy strings
 All vibrate to the fairy touch
 Of fingers bright with diamond rings,
 Of genius—brighter far than such.

But voiceless now! for ne'er again
 Shall Flora weave the minstrel's spell;
 And thus thy broken chords remain
 Still broken since the last farewell.

What a strange magic memory clings
 Around thy form! 'tis thus I warp
 Sad thoughts amid thy broken strings
 And sing of thee, O silent harp!

EXTRACT FROM "THE PROBLEMS OF LIFE."

Along the lake's green margin once again
 I walk reflective. 'Tis the Autumn now,
 A flush of glory tints the affluent woods,
 The wind comes wandering o'er the sun-burnt hills
 Sweet with the fragrance of the dying flowers,
 But I am happier now! Serener thoughts
 Flow tranquil through my soul, the night is passed,
 The night of wandering doubt and boding fear;
 No longer do I tread a mazy wild
 Of puzzling problems—I have found the key
 To solve the darkest riddles. I can sing
 Even in the night-time now. Wake up, my soul!
 Life in its better aspects I would view,
 Life sanctified, illumined by the rays
 Which emanate from Heaven's Empyrean.
 From where the emerald rainbow circles round
 The throne sublime of the Invisible;
 Down from the willows of Despondency
 Which droop o'er sorrow's melancholy stream,
 I'll take my harp and in exulting strains
 Sing like yon wild bird at the break of day.
 Life is not dark, but full of glorious meaning!
 Here where I saunter 'mong these broomy knolls,
 With God and Nature round me comes the light
 With healing balm, into my opening heart.
 The clouds have passed away, while quiet peace
 Falls, like the gentle dew, with healing shower
 Upon the silent bosom of the earth.
 Beautiful dew! Child of the shady eve!
 Nurse of the sleeping flowers! Breath of the dawn!
 No poison mingles with thy properties!
 And though thou fallest on the rankest weed,
 Or most obnoxious herb, thou art unstained,
 Starry and pure as when thy liquid gems
 Hang on the virgin forehead of the morn,
 Beautiful dew! So falls the peace of God
 On the expanding heart, till what was dead
 Throbs with a new-born life, and what was dark
 Grows luminous with day, doubts disappear,
 While happiness subdued, like a quiet rill,
 Flows through the inmost soul.

THE WHUSTLIN' BOY.

It was only a barefit, ragged boy
 Stravagin' along the street,
 Wi' lauchin' een, an' a sunny face,
 And oh! but he whustled sweet.
 Ye wadna gi'en tippence for a' his duds,
 But the laddie, what cared he?
 Tho' there wasna a farden in his pouch,
 Yet he fairly danced wi' glee.

And there was I, in the best o' health,
 Weel covered frae tap to tae,
 Baith bien an' braw, wi' sillar an' gowd
 Galore in my purse that day;
 Yet in thankless mood I hung my heid
 Like a man bow'd down wi' care,
 I couldna ha'e whustled as blithe a note
 For the worl's wealth I'm suir.

An' what was the reason? sae far's I ken,
 It was neither sorrow nor sin,
 But it seems when a man gets up in years
 That his whustlin' days are dune!
 Tho' indeed there's eneuch in life at times
 To mak' the best o' us grave,
 While clouds 'll gether, an' courage fail,
 Be ye ever sae bien an' brave.

Nae doot we value the needfu' gear,
 E'en mair than we whiles wad tell;
 An' to speak the truth I could maybe dae
 Wi' a wee thought mair mysel';
 But if even in the sma'est way we taste
 What worl'y abundance brings
 We ha'e learned that the truest wealth in life
 Disna lie in ootward things.

The whustlin' boy had naething! Ah wait!
 He was maybe no sae puir;
 He had love, an hope, an' the dew o' youth,
 Wi' a bosom free frae care.
 He had frien's an' comrades like himsel',
 An' a nest in a humble cot;
 So he sang like a laverock i' the lift,
 Content wi' what he had got.

Oh, cheerie lad wi' the curly pow!
 E'en whustle as lang's ye can,
 To mak' yer hay when the sun shines bricht
 Is ever the wisest plan;
 For gin ance ye cross the broo o' the hill,
 It's no the sillar an' claes
 That'll warm yer heart wi' the warlock lowe,
 An' the licht o' ither days.

SONG—OUR LAND FOR EVERMORE.

O bonny sings the laverock wild
 Through green Killarney's shades,
 And sweet descends the gloamin' mild
 In England's southern glades,
 But dearer still each heather hill,
 On Caledonia's shore;
 Her rowin' fuds, her wavin' wuds,
 Her valleys, we adore.
 Then join the sang,
 Come join the sang,
 Our land for evermore!

I've happy been fu' mony an' oor
 By far-off windin' rill;
 I lo'e the sangs o' Tammy Moore,
 An' southern bards, but still
 My heart aye turns to Robin Burns,
 Auld Scotia's bard of yore;
 He sang oor loves, oor native grooves,
 Oor green auld Heilans hoar.
 Then join the sang,
 Come join the sang,
 Our land for evermore!

Dear Scotia, cauld shall rin my bluid,
 Oh, dim shall be my e'e,
 Ere I forget the frien's I've met,
 Or cease to think o' thee—
 The hamely joys o' auld langsyne,
 The faithfu' hearts o' yore,
 Thy wild-wood dens, thy rocky glens,
 The waves that wash thy shore.
 Then join the sang,
 Come join the sang,
 Our land for evermore!



WILLIAM GIRVAN HENDRIE.

The test of genuine poetry is that it produces in the mind of the reader an æsthetical pleasure which can be felt better than it can be described. Some such feeling is experienced when perusing the pages of a little memorial volume of poems written by William Girvan Hendrie. Mr Hendrie was born in Galston, where his father was a bank-agent and carried on an extensive law practice. With a view to qualifying for a profession he attended the University of Glasgow, but changing his mind he adopted instead a commercial career. While residing in Glasgow he joined the membership of Sandyford

Church Literary Society, and it was in connection therewith that he made his *debut* as a poet. After a few years' commercial training in the city he proceeded on business to Brazil and the West Coast of Africa, and on his return to Glasgow entered into a business partnership. In course of time he removed to Ireland as representative of a Glasgow firm, and while in the Emerald Isle wrote a series of articles on the condition of Ireland and its people, besides composing a number of poetical pieces, which were published posthumously by his relatives as a tribute to his memory. He died in Dublin, and was buried in Mount Jerome Cemetery. Although the reverse of copious, Mr Hendrie's style is picturesque and highly imaginative.

AN IRISH FERN FABLE.

Maidenhair she flew with the mist and the wind
 To Sir Bracken, who dwells on the mountain side,
 And she said: "Dear lord, so stately and kind,
 Let me live with thee and be thy bride."
 But Laird Bracken replied, with an air austere:
 "We'll ha'e nane o' your foreign madams here."

Maidenhair came down in a pearly rain
 To my lady that dwells in the woodland glade,
 And she said: "Ah! noble kinswoman deign
 To pity and succour a hapless maid."
 But her ladyship ordered her man-at-arms
 To stifle the creature that threatened her charms.

Then Maidenhair prayed to the roses, the pines,
 To every fair daughter of forest and plain,
 And to blear-eyed beldams in caves and mines,
 But ever and always her prayer was in vain,
 Till her tresses were torn by the wintry gales,
 And were seen no more in those hills and vales.

In a lonely Isle 'mid Atlantic waves
 You will find, if you visit that savage clime,
 Vast rock-fields traversed with clefts like graves
 Half filled with the loam of a by-gone time.
 There Maidenhair lay in the dust all prone,
 As a dead thing that utters not gasp nor groan.

The scanty herbage lying there nigh hid
 Was won at a cost of peasant power,
 Enough to have reared the Great Pyramid,
 Or the Wall of China, or Babel's Tower;
 But nothing could Maidenhair see or say,
 Till an angel of heaven passed by that way.

It was not the glorious angel of Night,
 Whose sweeping wings bear the moon and the stars;
 'Twas a tiny angel of violet light,
 New flown through the morning sun-lit bars,
 Who kissed sweet Maidenhair's lips and eyes,
 And whispered, "Damsel, awake, arise!"

When Maidenhair peeped from her rocky lair
She saw the sun and the glancing sea,
The coast of Connaught, the cliffs of Clare,
And her tresses danced in the breeze with glee,
While beneath the blue, everlasting dome
She sang, "This land is my haunt and home."

The simple children of Inishmore
Are delicate, too, though poor and low,
'Tis little they wot of botanic lore;
But this they have learned, and this they know,
That the proudest beauty is proud to bear
A tress of Erin's wild maidenhair.

THE SEA PINK.

Where grim and serried ledges
Roll back the baffled wave,
Beside the salt-weed sedges
Blossoms the sea pink brave.

There, while the fretting water
Sways to and fro alway,
She sits, a sweet land daughter,
Kissed by the eager spray.

She wakes when summer whispers
And glances on the deep,
But winter's booming vespers
Enfold her dreamless sleep.

Whence came this small mermaid
That haunts the rough coast line,
That rises, chalice laden,
From pillows drenched with brine?

Sure she is some sea ranger
Blown from the crested surge,
O'er reef, and wreck, and danger,
To this amphibious verge.

Some germ of rifted mountains,
By swooping tempests sown,
Far from the free, sweet fountains
On ocean's barrier lone.

Or some tear-melted lover—
So might old poets feign—
That saw him sailing over
Who never came again.

Nay, such fantastic sadness
Ill fits our pretty one,
Who dwells in gipsy gladness
With ocean, land, and sun.

Think of her, O heart-broken,
 Whose love is on the sea;
 Say, is she not a token
 Of tender care for thee?

And ye who shrink and ponder
 When stormy billows roar,
 Forget not her out yonder,
 Nursling of sea and shore.



JAMES M. HODGE.

Among the sons of Vulcan we find several who have earnestly and to good purpose devoted their leisure hours to the cultivation of poetry. In the daytime round the red anvil you may see them stand "like Cyclopes in Vulcan's sooty abysm" moulding the fused iron into all curves and shapes, with as much ease as the potter moulds a piece of soft clay. In the evening you may perchance find them in somnambulism walking out of their red quarters into the far-away dreamland of Poesy, and seeing visions unthought of by more ordinary mortals.

Mr James M. Hodge, a native of Muirkirk, wields in duty's hour the welding-hammer and in the hour of leisure the poet's pen. He also finds time to take an active share of public duties, and as a Sabbath School teacher and superintendent, a church manager, and a temperance worker, he has spared no efforts to make himself a useful member of the community in which he is so well known and highly respected.

His poems breathe the spirit of simplicity and earnest piety. Mr Hodge takes a warm interest in all matters connected with the history of his parish, and has issued a descriptive work on the subject.

OOR MITHER TONGUE.

My harp gae bring, I'll try to sing
 Ance mair a hamely lay,
 The theme will be ane dear to me,
 Ilk oor o' life's short day.
 Fu' weel I ken that other men
 In lofty strains hae sung
 About the same dear honour'd theme—
 Oor ain Auld Mither Tongue.

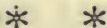
Wi' them I'll try, as time speeds by
 To add anither stane
 To swell that cairn, that stately cairn,
 Rear'd high in days by-gane

By men whose names stand high in fame,
 Whose deeds hae aften sprung
 Frae counsel guid, gi'en in oor braid
 And dear Auld Mither Tongue.

'Tis said this tongue's the ane that rung
 In Edin's bowers at e'en,
 When Adam wooed his bonnie bride
 To be his ain heart's queen.
 Be this the case or not, there's trace
 That it has aften rung
 In mony an ear in places queer,
 Oor ain Auld Mither Tongue.

Abroad or hame, 'tis aye the same,
 It mak's the heart strings dirl;
 It speaks o' hame an' frien'ship's flame,
 Throughout the wide, wide worl':
 The exile frae auld Scotia's shore,
 Let him be auld or young,
 Lo'es best o' a' when far awa'
 To hear Oor Mither Tongue.

O weel I min' the days langsyne,
 When on my faither's knee
 I sat, as king, and heard him sing
 Guid auld Scotch sangs to me;
 My heart wi' wild child-joy was filled,
 Life's chords were sweetly strung:
 Frae then till noo, or death ensue,
 I'll lo'e Oor Mither Tongue.



HUGH C. WILSON.

We should imagine that of all the occupations which fall to the lot of man that of landscape gardening must be the most exhilarating and pleasant, as well as the best adapted for fostering a taste for poetry. What so stimulating and delightful as a well laid-out garden, and what scene so tranquil, sweet, and gratifying to our higher sense:—

“So fresh, so pure, the woods, the sky, the air,
 It seems a place where angels might repair,
 And tune their harps beneath those tranquil shades
 To morning songs or moonlight serenades.”

Hugh C. Wilson, who was born in Old Cumnock, began the toils of life as a herd laddie, afterwards blossomed into a woodsman, and finally a landscape gardener, which vocation he followed for many years in the great city of London.

The laudable aspiration of this poet to write verse that will help forward and cheer his fellow voyagers in life is a

commendable one. Several of his poems, as "The Cobble and Creel," have a happy-go-easy swing about them that is at once refreshing and inspiring. Others of more sombre hue are marked by a not unpleasing tenderness and pathos. To whatever page of his writings we turn we find something that is worthy of perusal.

THE PIBROCH IS SOUNDING.

The pibroch is sounding far up in the heather,
 The rock-splintered peaks are repeating the call;
 Wives, maidens, and mothers are clustering together,
 And clansmen are belting in cottage and hall.
 The partings are over, the banners are streaming,
 And feet treading time to the beat of the strain,
 But many march forth to the pipes that are screaming
 Who ne'er will respond to their wild call again.

The storm clouds hang low on the dark hills of Morven
 And torrents are seething in caverns below;
 The night winds bring wailing to widow and orphan—
 The coronach mourns not the death of a foe.
 A handful of heroes return from the foray,
 The chief comes not back at the head of his men.
 The cairn shall be raised and the bards tell the story—
 The pibroch shall ne'er wake the chieftain again.

THE COBBLE AND CREEL.

When white waves are climbing the dark, shaven rock,
 Sing hey for the cobble and creel!
 And falling and rising with shock upon shock,
 Sing ho for the cobble and creel.
 When lads are at sea when the north winds arise,
 And over the tumbling waste yeasty spray flies,
 Oh, then may the boatie row weel.

When seafowl fly screaming from water to turf,
 Sing hey for the cobble and creel!
 And brave lads are wabbling far out in the surf,
 Sing ho for the cobble and creel!
 When wives, maids, and mothers are list'ning the roar,
 As wave upon wave wildly lashes the shore,
 Oh, then may the boatie row weel.

But life's not to any a fair-lighted street,
 Sing hey for the cobble and creel!
 We all get a taste of the sour and the sweet,
 Sing ho for the cobble and creel!
 The fishers have moments when storms they forget,
 Then here's to the lads of the cobble and net,
 And long may the boatie row weel.

REV. JAMES HOWAT.

Of the moorlands lying around the upland village of Muirkirk it has been said they are "flowered with the graves of the Covenant Martyrs." Cairntable, Wardlaw, and Airmoss are near, all keeping their own secrets of those dread "killing times," when peace-abiding peasants were hunted down like murderers and cut-throat brigands.

In this sacred country lies the early home of James Howat, and here he received his rudimentary schooling before proceeding to the University of Glasgow with the view of training for the ministry. After being licensed to preach by the United Presbyterian body he received a call from a congregation in Arbroath as colleague and successor to the Rev. William Allan. Mr Howat accepted the call, and has for upwards of thirty-six years faithfully stood by his first love, being at the present day senior minister of the congregation.

Mr Howat's life has been a busy one, and has afforded him little leisure for soliciting the favours of the Tuneful Nine. Nevertheless, he has written enough to warrant him a place in D. H. Edwards' "Modern Scottish Poets," in "The Bards of Angus," and in "Half Hours with Arbroath Poets," each notice bestowing on the poet-preacher a warm commendation. Not a few of Mr Howat's musings—and some of the best of them too—are reflective of the early scenes and associations of his boyhood, and as we read such pieces we feel that although long parted from the upland village his heart still wanders back to "the vacant wine-red moor, the graves of the Martyrs, and the humble homes of the silent, vanished races."

"Blows the wind to-day, and the sun and rain are flying,
Blows the wind on the moors, to-day, and now
Where about the graves of the martyrs the whaups are crying,
My heart remembers how."

LUNAN BRAES.

Tho' far awa' my heart's at hame
'Mang weel-kent folk wi' kindly ways;
In thochts by day, in dreams by nicht,
I'm hame again on Lunan Braes.

I hear the lintie in the morn
Pour forth his sweet melodious lays,
The laverock's sang aboon the corn,
The braw corn fields on Lunan Braes.

I see a lassie 'mang the stooks,
 The lass I lo'ed in early days;
 And fond love ever draws me hame
 To meet wi' her on Lunan Braes.

O lassie fair, mair dear to me
 Than a' the honours earth displays;
 Heaven grant to me my dearest wish,
 To ca' thee mine on Lunan Braes.

A DREAM OF THE NORTH COUNTRY.

Sometimes in the busy city, amid the din of the mills,
 My thought takes wing to the old home far off in the Norlan' hills;
 I hear the bee in the heather and the bleating of the flocks,
 And the sound of running waters among the reeds and the rocks:
 I play with brothers and sisters out on the green hill-side,
 And I meet again with Mysie—with Mysie, my love and pride.
 We gather around the fireside; father comes in from the hill;
 The book is read, we kneel in prayer, in the gloamin' cool and still.
 And when the mist and the mirkness shrouds every hill and cairn
 Mother comes in like an angel, and kisses each sleeping bairn.

Morning dawns on Mount Battock; the mist creeps up Mount
 Keen;

I stand once more on Dalbrach bridge, but "the auld hoose"
 isna seen.

The old folks sleep in the kirkyard—in the kirkyard by the Lee;
 Brothers and sisters parted wide, far from the North Country.
 Two went out to fight our battles—ah! 'tis thus the world goes!
 One sleeps among the Zulu grass, and one 'neath th' Afghan snows;
 And Mysie, my pride and my treasure, that was to have been my
 wife,

Sleeps by the side of the old folks—she holds the half of my life.

The snow lies deep on Battock, and deeper on lofty Keen;
 And a mist comes up the valley, and a mist comes owre my e'en.
 I stand in the lonely kirkyard, and I think of days to come,
 And dream of a distant City, and the heavenly Father's home.
 Far above the snowy hill-tops, and the clouds so dull and grey,
 Where joy is a joy unmingled, and day aye a summer day.
 Still the mill-wheels keep on grinding, but the evening hour will
 come,

Then a short sleep, and the waking, to find myself safe at home.



GEORGE M'MURDO,

Quite a number of our Ayrshire bards have belonged to that useful and hardy class of toilers whom Tennant in his "Anster Fair" describes as "poor human mouldwarps, doomed to scrape in earth, Cimmerian people, strangers to the sun, gloomy as soot with faces grim and swarth." George

M'Murdo has earned his living in the coal mines since he was a lad of about twelve, and he is now past the meridian of life. He was born near Lugar, where first he entered the mines, afterwards spending some seventeen years at Waterside, near Dalmellington. At the end of that time he drifted back to Muirkirk, finally settling down some twenty-three years ago in Catrine, where he presently holds the post of School Board Officer for the parish of Sorn.

His talent for verse has been stimulated chiefly by a constant study of the poems of Robert Burns. His verses are simple in the extreme but they have a sincere ring.

Mr M'Murdo was the winner of a prize in a song-making competition, held January 21st, 1882, under the auspices of the proprietors and publishers of the "Kilmarnock Standard." The author has forwarded for use in this work the song which carried off the palm.

BLAWEARIE, I'M WAE!

Blawearie, I'm wae when around thee I wander
 And silently sigh o'er the days that are gane;
 But still you hae charms, for I ever get fonder
 At gloamin' beside thee to ponder alane.
 There white is the gowan and green is the bracken,
 When fann'd by the gladdening breezes o' May;
 Alas! amid beauty you languish forsaken,
 To gaze on your ruin—"Blawearie, I'm wae."

I hear the glad shout o' the bairns as they gambol
 Upon the green sward 'neath thy sheltering wing,
 I see lovers meeting in rapture to ramble
 O'er Wellwood's gay heights 'mid the glories o' Spring.
 At eve roun' thy ingle the youthfu' and hoary
 Sit subjects a' leal to affection's calm sway,
 The winter nicht passes wi' sang and wi' story;
 That oucht should divide them—"Blawearie, I'm wae."

But oh! they are gane like the mist frae Cairntable,
 When Sol adds his ray to the fresh rising breeze;
 With Death some are sleeping, while Fortune unstable
 Makes ithers to wander far over the seas,
 And lowly ye lie, broken down and deserted,
 All silent and cheerless that ance was sae gay;
 But destiny's mandate—oh! whae can avert it?
 That time makes sic changes—"Blawearie, I'm wae."

I cling to you still, tho' your glory is ended,
 And rank grows the nettle where stood the big chair,
 With sweetest of mem'ries your name's ever blended,
 The dream of the past is a shield frae despair;
 The lark in the lift sings as sweetly as ever,
 The mavis as blythe at the close o' the day.
 Can lov'd ones thus parted e'er meet me? oh, never,
 And sad is my heart at—"Blawearie, sae wae."

ALEXANDER LAW ORR.

"Things are achieved," says a noted novelist, "when they are well begun—the perfect archer calls the deer his own while yet the shaft is whistling." Alexander Law Orr made a good start in life, and had achieved at least partial success when he was cut off by an unfortunate accident in the twenty-sixth year of his age. He was a native of Hurlford, his father being a coal-mine manager, whose position enabled him to give his family a good education. Alexander, after engaging for about four years as a pupil teacher in Hurlford Academy, formed a wish to qualify for the ministry, and while attending courses at the Universities of Glasgow and Edinburgh he began to compose occasional poetical pieces. His musings cannot fairly be judged by the pieces left behind. Had years been spared him we know not to what higher levels he might have reached. As it is we can detect in his verses

"A strain of pity for the weak,
The poor that fall without a cry,
The shrouded hearts that never speak,
But break beneath life's press—and die."

**WILLIAM ROBERTSON.**

Although William Robertson occupies a definite place amongst the romancers of Ayrshire, his attentions to the muse have been so casual that he almost shrinks from acknowledging himself to be a worshipper of the "Tuneful Nine." If he has been a somewhat dilatory worker on the meadow slopes of Helicon, he has been unusually active in other departments of literature. Besides being a contributor of stories in serial form to Dundee and Glasgow newspapers, he is the author of several romances, dealing chiefly with the traditions and historical associations of his native county. The manner in which one work from his pen is followed in rapid succession by another is reminiscent of the facile manner of John Galt, of Irvine, whom Mr Robertson also emulates in his wealth of local colouring and delineation of native characteristics. Mr Robertson is responsible, too, for weekly articles of an introspective and quasi-critical nature, contributed to several Ayrshire newspapers, and which on account of the fair-minded and generous spirit displayed have won the writer not a few staunch friends. As to poetry, he con-

fesses that he never seriously cultivated the art. Notwithstanding several meritorious pieces from his pen have appeared now and again in various periodicals and newspapers, under the *nom de plume* of "Carrick Hill." Mr Robertson is a son of the manse and a native of Ayr.

A list of his prose works will be found in our Bibliographical Index.

"AND I SAW A NEW EARTH."

No, I canna jist bear to think on't
That it's a' to pass awa';
The mountains auld an' the breezes cauld,
The fogs an' the drivin' snaw—
To pass wi' a crash like the sea on the shore,
Like lichtnin's flash, or like thunder's roar.

There'll be pearly gates, ye tell me,
An' sae heich an' sae braw they'll be?
What's pearly gates to a man that's stood
By the soundin' gates o' the sea,
When the sea meets sky on a winter's day
And the big waves roar to the rock-bound bay.

The streets will be paved wi' gold, ye say?
What a sicht for a miser's een!
But gi'e me the haugh an' the daisies white,
An' the wee bluebells between,
The buttercups, wi' their golden gleam,
Like the sunlicht flash on a mountain stream.

Ye're sayin' the trees will be evergreen?
I dootna it micht be sae,
But think o' the glint on the bonnie broom,
The moss on the aspen grey,
The big yellow gowans amang the corn,
As bricht as the licht o' a simmer's morn.

There's a sea o' glass, an' it's mingled wi' fire?
What's that to the angry main,
When the sun comes oot ayont the bay
Through spindrift an' squalls o' rain,
When the storm clouds burst in their dreadfu' glee
On the flyin' foam o' a wrathfu' sea?

There's a river o' life, an' it's deep an' wide,
An' it rins by the pearly gates?
But will't loup the crags, will't boil in the linns
When the rains are oot, an' the spates,
Wi' their awesome roar an' their ceaseless sang,
An' their solemn music the hale nicht lang?

But think o' the harpers wi' golden harps?
Yes, I'd like to hear them fine,
But gi'e me the win' on the winter hill
That wails to the stunted pine,
An' it's oh! for the pibroch, soft or wild,
That makes my he'rt like the he'rt o' a child.

I'll wait if I can till the new earth's made,
 T'will be heaven enough for me.
 Oh, the thund'rin' sang there will be on it's shore;
 The dreadfu' peal o' its tempest roar!
 An' the hills—what a heicht they will be!
 Scarr'd an' riven wi' mountain streams,
 I can see their cataracts in my dreams,
 An' their white foam flyin' free.

An' I'd like to hear the bagpipes shrill
 Come soughin' doon frae the heather hill,
 The seabird's cry an' the lark in the lift,
 A singin' speck in a cloudland rift;
 An' I'd like to see the yellow corn
 In the soft sweet haze o' the autumn morn.

Yes, yes, the new earth will dae for me,
 Just gi'e me that, an' let me be,
 An' I'll leeve by its shores through eternity.

THE FLYING DUTCHMAN.

We were off the pitch of the Cape, d'ye see?
 The day was a kind of hazy,
 There wasn't much wind, and we jogged along
 Feeling a sort of lazy.
 But you never knew just what it's up to,
 Down there, in that southern sea,
 And before we could reach a halliard
 The wind came away quite free.

The skipper he shouts for all hands on deck,
 We let go the staysails right smart,
 And in came the royals and top-gallant sails,
 We had only enough of a start;
 For, before we had passed the gaskets
 Round the main top-gallant sail,
 A southerly burster was blowin'—
 The worst sort of southern gale.

We pulled up the clews of the mainsail,
 And the buntlines as fast as we could,
 And then we lay out on the yardarms
 And stowed it, hard down on the wood.
 Why, you ought to have heard that gale piping,
 And just seen how dark grew the clouds,
 The wind whistled worse than a bo'sin
 Through the blocks, and the gear, and the shrouds.

With one topsail and a rag of a staysail
 We headed right into that sea;
 A look-out was sent up to the lower masthead,
 And he peered out from under its lee.
 It took two men to hold the wheel straight—
 The ship plunged so sore and so deep—
 Why, every wave was a mountain,
 And its trough was a regular steep.

It went on like this till the evenin',
I can tell ye, not much to our likin',
The gale reached its head in the dog-watch
Just as seven bells was a-striking.
I was watching the man who was keeping look-out,
And I saw him a-pointing ahead;
Quite scared-like he was, and he brandished his arms,
And his face was as pale as the dead.

I jumped for the foremast riggin',
And in spite of the sea and the gale,
I managed to clamber right over the top—
No wonder the look-out was pale.
For a cable's-length almost ahead of us
Was a ship with a full press of sail,
Not a stitch but was set, from main royal down,
From the truck to the weather rail.

She careened as she came, she plunged and she dived,
But she started not sheet, nor a tack,
Behind her the breakers came tearing,
I made sure she'd be caught flat aback,
But no. Though she strained and she quivered,
And buried her nose in the sea,
She rose like a duck on the water,
And threw it to weather and lee.

You know me, boys—I'm not easily scared,
But I felt my flesh all of a creeping,
And I slapped my legs, and pinched my arms,
To make quite sure I wasn't sleeping.
There was never a sound came from her,
Though she plunged, she was still as the grave;
Though she tore through the sea like a grampus,
Not a swish, not a whisper she gave.

That gale would have burst any canvas
That ever was bent on jack-stays,
But she minded the storm, I can tell ye,
No more than a ship on the ways.
Her crew, every man at his quarters,
A gang on the forecastle head,
On the maindeck, the waist, and the quarter—
My God! every man of them—dead.

There was light in their eyes though, I tell ye,
And they looked at our hard-straining craft
As she plunged and she dived in the billows
While the seas swept us right fore and aft.
On the poop was the skipper, as sure as I breathe,
He lifted his hand up to beckon,
And a death-meaning smile lighted up the set face
Of that man—Philip Vanderdecken.

I couldn't but look at that ship, boys,
Though the wild sea seemed all in the sky,
And the gates of the storm were wide open
As the Flying Dutchman went by.

But the vividest flash of lightning,
 And the crash of the thunder roll,
 Made me shrink to the lee of the foremast,
 And struck terror right into my soul.

And though I looked back in an instant
 The Dutchman had vanished and gone,
 Where she had gone to, the Lord only knows,
 But we sailed the wild ocean alone.
 I left that craft in Australia,
 She sailed off for home without me;
 But she ne'er reached the port she was bound for,
 With all hands she went down in the sea.

And I never cross the Leguillas bank,
 When the winter storms are high,
 But I think of the Flying Dutchman
 And his angry sea and sky.
 Till the last great day of the Judgment
 He'll sail with the stormy blast—
 So, he's far more time to go, boys,
 Than the time he's gone in the past.

[NOTE.—The legend of the Flying Dutchman is as weird as it is well known. Beset by a succession of head winds and storms off the Cape of Good Hope, the skipper, Philip Vanderdecken, was impious enough to curse his Maker, and to swear that no power in heaven or in earth would prevent him beating round the Cape. He would get round it, he affirmed, if he beat till the Day of Judgment. So there he is beating at this day, and there he will remain till the sea shall be no more.]

THE GREY OLD TOWN.

Between the rivers and the sounding sea
 Sits the grey old town.
 Centuries long the rivers have run by it.
 Centuries long the ocean has sung to it.
 Cradled to song of its many waters.
 Myriad children, sons and daughters,
 Have come and sped
 While the centuries fled,
 O'er the grey old town.

In the unseen vast a Good Spirit broods
 O'er the grey old town.
 A Spirit that lives while the people die,
 Many a year it has heard their cry,
 Has known their care, their sorrow, their strife,
 Love in Legion, and death in life,
 And all abroad
 It watches for God,
 O'er the grey old town.

There's an endless song of the mother sea
 To the grey old town.
 And what it is singing there's none can say,
 But the song is new with each dawning day.

It is ever the same, yet it never grows old,
And a thousand years that song has rolled
 Across the sand
 Where the sea meets land
 By the grey old town.

The stars in their courses are shining clear
 O'er the grey old town.
Up in the vault is the silvery moon,
Trailing clouds or sombre gloom.
Gloom, and moon, and voice of the deep,
The watchman wakes and the people sleep,
 And up in the sky
 The wild birds fly
 O'er the grey old town.

The dead are sleeping amid the sands
 Of the grey old town,
And every morning droops to night,
The shadows pass and the morn is bright.
If there's many a cradle, there's many a grave,
It's a stately requiem sung by the wave.
 As ebbs the tide,
 Man cannot abide
 In the grey old town.

Watchman, tell me what of the night
 In the grey old town.
The night is passing, and, see it who may,
There's a broadening streak on the breaking day,
And generations all unborn
Shall joy in the light of the coming morn,
 And with beam divine
 The sun shall shine
 On the grey old town.

Sleeping, waking, the people wait
 In the grey old town.
A thousand years it was here as now,
A thousand furrows mark its brow,
And by the waters it will be found
At the echoing call of the trumpet sound,
 When the dead shall rise
 To the endless skies
 From the grey old town.



WILLIAM LEE.

William Lee, who is a master baker in Galston, is a strong believer in the bread that perisheth, but he also holds firmly to the belief that man cannot live by bread alone, and has lately demonstrated his belief in this doctrine by publishing a volume of cleverly written idyls and poems.

Mr Lee, who is a native of Damhead, in the parish of Craigie, is a person of deep and wide sympathies and of varied attainments, "A man so various that he seems to be not one, but all mankind's epitome." He is well known (and that farther afield than Ayrshire) as a Freemason, a bowler, an angler, and a poet, and his fluent speech makes him a welcome companion by the fireside, on the green, or by the eddying edge of the salmon pool.

Removing with his parents at an early age to Kilmarnock he there received a rudimentary education, and at the age of ten began to work for a small pittance in a tobacco factory. But the fragrant weed could not long restrain him, and leaving this employment he entered that of a china merchant as shop assistant. While here the muse first shed its benign influence over him, but he had yet to find the true vocation of his life, and retaining the muse but leaving the chinaware to the care of another, he started on his career as a baker, toiling and striving and poetizing till he built up a good business of his own in Galston, where he still engages in the trade. Previous to settling in Galston as a master baker, Mr Lee spent a few years in Tarbolton, and being one of the Masonic craft, he was appointed secretary of St. James' Lodge, an office held for some time by Robert Burns, and his brother Gilbert. While in office Mr Lee frequently wore the jewels that had adorned the breast of our national poet.

THE SONG OF THE ANGLER.

The morning is cloudy, the wind from the west,
Is kissing the wild flow'rs and ruffling the breast
Of the dark, shady pools, where the speckled trout lies,
So eagerly watching and waiting for flies.

Chorus—

Then give me my rod, my line, and my reel,
A fly from the storm-cock, a fly from the teal,
The licht o' a hare lug, and hackle o' black,
My piece in my pouch and my creel on my back.

Let the huntsman halloo as he bounds o'er the hill,
Tracking the foxhounds, all eager to kill.
Let the game-killing sportsman delight in his gun,
And boast of his bag when the day's work is done.

Chorus—

But give me my line, my rod, and my reel, etc.

I envy them not their sport on the hill,
So long's I've a rod and a fly that will kill;
The dog-fox may bark and the moorcock may scream,
While happy I fish o'er some clear winding stream.

Chorus—

Then give me my rod, my line, and my reel,
A fly from the storm-cock, a fly from the teal,
The licht o' a hare lug, and hackle o' black,
When evening comes roun' I'll be hame wi' a tak'.

LINES TO A DEAD MAVIS FOUND IN LOUDOUN
WOODS.

Cauld, heartless wretch—for such thou art,
That whizzing sent this fatal dart,
Wi' lightning speed right through the heart
O' this wee singer;
'Twad been thy price if trigger smart
Had brak thy finger.

Nae mair, sweet bird, at close o' day,
The cottar, trudging o'er the way,
Shall rest to hear thy hinmost lay
Float thro' the glade;
Nae mair thou'lt greet the break o' day,
For low thou'rt laid.

And never mair thy thrilling sang
Shall echo Loudoun's woods amang,
Nae mair adown yon burnie gang
To meet thy mate;
And she, puir thing, tho' thinking lang,
Kens nae thy fate.

But maybe some ane o' thy feather,
That oft has seen ye sport thegither,
Kennin' fu' weel you lo'ed each ither,
The news will carry;
Oh may he break it like a brither,
And wi' her tarry

Till ance thy young hae ta'en the wing,
And Nature taught them how to sing,
As sweet as e'er thou did'st in Spring
Or Summer day;
And mak' the leafy plantain ring
Wi' gladsome lay.

THE BAILIE AND THE SPIDERS.

Oh wae's me for the spiders,
The blanket rack's ta'en doon;
Like horses wantin' riders
They're rinnin' roun' an' roun'.

They're coursing o'er the ceiling,
They're coursing o'er the floor,
And some are sitting squealing
Abune the sanctum door.

The Bailie's crying, "Vermin,
 I'll mak' ye shift your looms;
 Too long your tribe's been swarmin'
 Within my business rooms."

At this an auld grey chappie
 Cocked out his head and said:
 "For lang we've here been happy
 Thrang working at our trade.

"Our forbears started spinning
 Within this very room,
 I'm tauld that their beginning
 Was ae wee corner loom.

"By dint o' perseverance
 We've looms in every hole;
 To think you'll talk o' clearance
 Is mair than we can thole.

"I spoke to you this morning
 As you cam' in the door,
 Without a moment's warning
 You swept me to the floor.

"It ill becomes a Bailie
 To hunt a neebor's gear;
 You've done as much as jail ye
 If it were proven clear."

The Bailie mused in silence
 Beside the blanket rack;
 Then said—"Forgive my violence,
 You'll get another tack.

"Don't look for me repairing
 Your heddles or your treads;
 Be thankfu' that I'm sparing
 Your best and newest steads.

"Ca' a' your tribe together,
 And tell them we've agreed,
 And while you talk through ither
 I'll just soop up the deid."

* * *

JAMES STRANG.

James Strang was born in Ayr, but spent his early years in the Vale of Leven, close to the "bonnie, bonnie banks o' Loch Lomond." He began his career in Glasgow, but migrated to London in 1889, having then already made his mark in the literary world as a writer of magazine articles and

verse. In March of that year, just before leaving for the Metropolis, he married Ellen Vallance, third daughter of the late Alexander Vallance, Glengyron, Cumnock.

In the Empire's capital Mr Strang gradually pushed himself to the front. For several years he was London correspondent to the "Dumbarton" and "Lennox Herald," while later he became, in addition, a London Letter writer to the "Glasgow Herald" and "Edinburgh Evening News," while he was also on the literary staff of the "Herald" as a reviewer. In addition, he wrote largely for several of the leading London newspapers, and was a frequent contributor to the principal magazines. Notwithstanding this press of work, Mr Strang still found time to devote to verse, and became well known as a writer of songs and librettos for cantatas and children's plays. He is the author of two volumes of verse and of a novel entitled "A Lass of Lennox," which met with considerable success.

Always a keen politician, Mr Strang became private secretary to the Solicitor-General for Scotland in Lord Rosebery's administration, and continued to serve with that Minister—as the office is a Government appointment—for two months after Lord Salisbury took office. At the general election of 1900 Mr Strang was unanimously invited by the Liberals of Greenock to stand for Parliamentary honours, but declined owing to a difference of opinion with regard to sugar bounties and counter-vailing duties. He took an active platform part, however, in the west of Scotland during the election.

In May, 1902, Mr Strang had a bad breakdown in health, and was peremptorily ordered to South Africa by his medical advisers, for which place he sailed in August of that year with his wife and little son, the latter dying in Cradock in July of the following year, to the great grief of his parents. Almost immediately upon landing he was offered, and accepted, the editorship of the "Cradock Observer," which he held till July of 1903, when he was invited to take over the editorship of the "Kroonstad Times," which he accepted, and in which he became a partner two years later.

When Responsible Government was granted to the Orange River Colony, Mr Strang came forward, in response to a largely signed requisition, as Independent candidate for the representation of Kroonstad Town in the House of Assembly. The election took place in November, 1907, when Mr Strang was defeated, by 25 votes only, by a former member of the old Free State Raad, who had been resident in Kroonstad for forty years.

That Mr Strang has had little time for the writing of verse since he went to South Africa will be understood when it is stated that, besides conducting a bi-weekly newspaper, he plays

a leading and varied part in the public life of the town in which his lot has been cast. He has been Chief of the Kroonstad Caledonian Society for the last six years, in addition to which he is Chairman of the Sick and Provident Society, Chairman and stage manager of the Amateur Operatic Society, Chairman of the Kroonstad Athletic Club, Chairman of the Cycling and Harriers Club, and member of the Church Council and Library Committee. He took an active part in the movement for South African Union, and was vice-president of the Kroonstad Closer Union Society, and a member of the Union Conference which met in Johannesburg early in 1909.

Mr Strang proved a vigorous opponent of General Hertzog's Education Act, and was one of the twenty gentlemen invited by General Hertzog from all over the Orange River Colony to meet him at Bloemfontein in November, 1909, to discuss the difficulties and disagreements in connection with the Act, and to endeavour to arrive at a settlement.

LIFE PICTURES.

A baby girl on mother's knee,
With Heaven's own azure in her eyes,
Who prattles in her infant glee,
And knows not yet the sound of sighs.

A little lass that singing goes
Adown the narrow village street,
As free as any wind that blows,
With merry laugh and dancing feet.

A maiden singing in the choir,
With modest eyes and face demure,
Unvex'd by any vain desire,
Because her simple heart is pure.

A woman waiting by the wood,
With soul as white and chaste as snow—
The fairest flow'r of maidenhood
Of all that in God's garden blow.

A mother weeping o'er the child
Whose father never saw its face.
Oh! weary eyes, so wan and wild!
Oh heart quick breaking with disgrace!

A wanderer in the cruel town,
Whose face as any dead is white,
Whose womanhood has lost its crown,
Who haunts the shadows of the night.

A woman's wild despairing scream,
A burden on the river's breast
Borne seaward on the swirling stream—
No more—God only knows the rest.

REV. GILBERT CLARK.

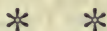
"A genius in the reverend gown, must ever keep its owner down," saith the poet, but the fire of genius cannot be quenched so easily, nor has it been subdued in the case of the poet-preacher Gilbert Clark, who was born at the farmhouse of Auchenlongford, in the parish of Sorn, and on the borders of Airdsmoss.

Mr Clark received his early schooling at Catrine and at Sorn, being engaged for a time in Sorn as a pupil teacher.

After training for the ministry at Scottish and Continental Universities he was engaged as assistant to several divines, and was called eventually to a charge of his own at Haywood, in the parish of Carnwath.

MORNING.

Fresh springs the morn from out the saffron east,
 And blushes like a maiden in her prime,
 Chasing away the vapour and the rime
 That night doth spread as banquet-cloth at feast
 Of stellar-gods, and spirit nymphs of yore
 Who start to life in ancient Grecian lore!
 And sparkles on each blade of grass the dew,
 As countless pearls upon the youthful breast
 Of fairest lady on a couch of rest,
 While flow'rs awake to greet the morn anew;
 And hark! within the grove are heard the notes
 Of myriad choristers whose liquid throats
 Pour forth a flood of song. The peasant hears
 When, fresh from sleep, for labour he appears.



THOMAS KILLIN.

Circumstances may mould a man or a man may mould circumstances, as in the case of Thomas Killin, who, in his enthusiastic endeavours to raise funds for the erection of the Mauchline Burns Memorial, evolved a turn of circumstances which in turn made of him a poet. By moral suasion, letter and rhyme, he worked indefatigably from the earliest inception to the full realisation of the most laudable scheme that has ever been carried out in honour of our National Poet.

Mr Killin was born and bred in a Burns atmosphere, his native place being Mauchline. After trying his 'prentice hand at one or two occupations in the village he entered the service

of Messrs William Baird & Co., Ironmasters, Lugar, who, perceiving his integrity and ability, promoted him after four and a half years' service to the post of out-door manager. This necessitated his removal to Glasgow, where he is now located, and where he still retains all the good qualifications which he carried thither.

Mr Killin is a person of versatile talent, and has gained collegiate honours for chemistry and metallurgy. Besides indulging in verse he has contributed interesting prose articles to various magazines. The articles from his pen in volumes 15 and 16 of "Burns Chronicle" are able and elucidating, and contain much valuable lore relating to Burns and the Tennants of Glenconner.

THE BURNS' MEMORIAL AT MAUCHLINE.

Messrs W. & T. Samson, Nurserymen, Kilmarnock (descendants of the "Tam Samson" of Burns' famous elegy) gave a valuable donation to the National Burns Memorial and Cottage Homes, Mauchline, their gift taking the form of a privet hedge to enclose the grounds and ornamental trees and shrubbery to adorn it. The work of planting was delayed longer than was expected owing to the grounds not being ready. On the day they commenced to plant the hedge and shrubbery Mr Killin, the honorary treasurer, unaware that operations had begun, delivered himself of the following, the per contra of which is now a reality:—

Glasgow, 7th April, 1899.

Tam Samson's requiem Burns did write,
Tellin' how death puir Tam did smite;
But latterly he altered quite
His story scrievin,
An' these, his last words, cam' to light—
"Tam Samson's livin'!"

That Burns was wrang there's little doubt,
For beech or thorn, nae kind o' root
Will e'er by him 'gain be sent out
To shaw or mead;
For death has gi'en the chiel a clout—
Tam Samson's dead!

He promised weel to plant a hedge
O' privet nicely round the edge
O' our bit grun', inside the ledge,
An' saw some seed;
But death has firmly got the sage—
Tam Samson's dead!

Wi' fancy ivy round its wall,
The tower a' clad in beauty's thrall,
Each wee bit plot, an' corner all,
'Twas a' agreed;
But wha will daur say, now it shall—
Tam Samson's dead!

The birds which Tam did sair molest
Nae chance will get to build a nest
In hedge or tree—maybe it's best,
For, without dread,
They'll search for worms, or hap, or rest—
Tam Samson's dead!

When winter blasts come round them there,
The auld folks they will feel them sair;
Nae shrubs nor trees, protection rare,
In time o' need;
For tower and cottage will be bare—
Tam Samson's dead!

In simmer time, when days are fine,
It's bask they may in warm sunshine,
But under shade of tree or vine
They ne'er shall read;
O' plantin' shrubs there's yet nae sign—
Tam Samson's dead!

The caretaker may mourn an' mane,
For word o' Tam's help, yet there's nane;
The committee may grunt an' grane,
A' without heed;
For cauld and bare the grounds remain—
Tam Samson's dead!

PER CONTRA.

Whist! let this word be now sent out
To town an' kintra round about,
Ere lang the grounds will be, nae doubt,
An earthly heaven;
There's shrubbery planted sune will sprout—
Tam Samson's livin'!

The late Sir William Allan, M.P. for Sunderland, having received a circular and letter from Mr Killin, treasurer of the Mauchline Burns Memorial movement, requesting a subscription, sent the following reply:—

“Scotland House, Sunderland,
“January 27, '98.

“Dear Sir,—

“The calls upon a pair M.P.
Are unco ill to bear,
The mair especially when he
Is no' a millionaire.

Ye little ken, ye canna dream,
The aye ootflowing course
That like an ever steady stream
Comes frae my kyteless purse.

“The bias o’ my heart is aye
To do whate’er I can
To help upon life’s weary way
A strugglin’ fellow-man;
To ocht that’s guid I likewise give,
I.E., whan I’ve the cash;
When scant o’ this it is to me
An unco mental fash.

“Wi’ Christmas gifts and Ne’er-day ploys
My purse is fu’ o’ gloom;
Noo void o’ gowd or siller joys,
’Tis like a blether toom.
I canna send ye ocht the noo
For Burns Memorial Hallan;
Should fortune’s favours fa’ anew,
Ye’ll hear frae Wm. Allan.

“Thomas Killin, Esq., Glasgow.”

Mr Killin replied, addressing the envelope as follows:—

“Awa’! awa’! to Sunderland,
An’ speir for William Allan;
He’s ane o’ Scotland’s poets, and
A braw, big, buirdly callan.
’Twill no be ill to fin’ him oot,
Tho’ I don’t ken his callin’;
That he’s an M.P. there’s nae doot,
An’ Scotland Hoose his dwellin’.”

The reply letter:—

“The post brocht in yer note yestreen,
A ‘Scotch Thistle’ painted on it—
A sicht sae dear to my twa een,
I maist took aff my bannet.
Thinks I, noo that’s frae Scotland Hoose,
Frae that big sturdy callan’,
Wha’ aye for Scotia craws sae croose,
That M.P. William Allan.

“Wi’ haste the envelope I oped,
An’ syne I keekit in it,
An’ lukit for the cheque I hoped
Wad be contained within it.
But nae sic’ pleasure met my sicht—
A fule was I that thocht it—
For naething like ane cam’ to licht,
The paper for’t’s no wrocht yet.

“ An’ then the letter oot I took,
 An’ glanced at the first page o’t,
 An’ sees it’s written like a book
 O’ poems, by the g’age o’t.
 I read it slowly ower and ower,
 An’ yet again I read it,
 An’ wadna gie’t for ony fower
 Refusals I hae had yet.

“ It’s fill’t wi’ gems fu’ rich an’ rare
 As e’er were steal’t or bocht, na’;
 Its wishes are as guid, I’m sure,
 As ever yet were thocht o’.
 But promises ne’er raised a fund
 For ony undertakin’,
 An’ better is a bird in hand
 Than twa among the bracken.

“ Howe’er, I’m sure ye’ll keep ye’r word,
 Tho’ it should be a towmond;
 We’ll yet get something frae the bard
 To help’s wi’ the endowment.
 An’ when it comes, I’ll tak’ my aith,
 ’Twill be nae paltry shillin’,
 But something that will please, or faith
 My name’s no Thomas Killin.”

On asking Mr Allan’s consent to read his letter at the Mauchline conversazione in Glasgow, Mr Allan replied as follows:—

“ House of Commons, Feb. 16th, 1898.

“ Dear Tammas Killin,
 I’m harly willin’
 That you should read the letter,
 Sae limp an’ sprauchlin’,
 To chiels frae Mauchlin’
 Wha could hae dune far better;
 But should ye do it
 I winna rue it,
 Nor fistin’ anger fall in.
 Sae do it cleanly,
 An’ awfu’ freenly,
 For the sake o’ Wm. Allan.”

After the lapse of a year Mr Killin made a second appeal which bled the bank.

LETTER TO MR WILLIAM ALLAN, M.P.

Dear frien’! I trouble ye again
 About our Burns Memorial,
 An’ though herewith a list I sen’,
 I’m no’ the least censorial.

Still, tho' ye read frae en' to en'
 (It surely needs owrehauln'),
 Ye'll see as yet, an' fine ye ken',
 There's nocht frae William Allan.

When Fortune cam' again your way,
 Ye said we'd gain your favour,
 An' loth am I to think or say,
 That this was just a haver.
 You promised fair to gie's a han'
 Wi' "Burns Memorial Hallan;"
 It's mair than I can understand,
 Wi' nocht frae William Allan.

It's just a year this very nicht
 Sin' I got your first letter,
 Pledgin' yoursel' to mak' things richt,
 When wark was doing better.
 But, whist! what noise is this I hear,
 That's soundin' through the dwallin'!
 'Tis this that's ringin' in my ear,
 "There's nocht frae William Allan!"

Doun Ayrshire way they seem to think
 The fickle jad is jokin',
 Or else that she's gien ye the jink,
 Or what's as bad, just mockin'.
 On Opening Day, on Concert Day,
 Deaved was I wi' their bawlin',
 "Be sure an' let's ken when ye hae
 That word frae Poet Allan."

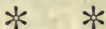
Aye, since our screeds got into prent,
 The folks hae been sae watchfu'
 For news o' something bein' sent,
 That, faith! I'm gettin' bashfu'.
 For east it's sae, when west it's sae,
 When north, or when I'm lallan,
 It's aye the same, an' every day,
 "Ony word frae William Allan?"

Our spree comes aff in twa-three weeks,
 An' then they'll a' be spierin'
 If "Gateshead" has "drawn up his breeks;"
 If no, I'll get a hearin'!
 For ilka ane will swear it's me,
 's been mim-mou'd wi' the callan',
 But fain I houp ere then there'll be
 Some word frae William Allan.

Now, if the Dame's still in the huff,
 At what that ye've expended,
 On "Ne'erday ploys and Christmas stuff,"
 May her spleen soon be ended.
 This earnest wish to her I sen',
 May she on you be callin';
 Sune may she "tak' a thocht an' men',"
 An' favour William Allan.

MR ALLAN'S ANSWER.

Killin, ye are a clever chiel,
 An' nane for beggin' better;
 Ye'd e'en draw siller frae the Deil,
 Gin ye sent him a letter!
 Ye'd draw frae rich! ye'd draw frae puir!
 Ye'd draw frae ony cadger!
 Ye've drawn frae me; sae I am sure,
 You're fit to draw a badger!



THOMAS DYKES.

The Ayrshire farmhouse has furnished many a Scottish pulpit, and sent out to the world not a few men of massive intellect, including statesmen, inventors, poets, lawyers, and agriculturists of great renown.

Thomas Dykes, who was born at Hillhouse farm, in the parish of Dundonald, studied for the law, but the occupation proving too prosy for his tastes, he exchanged the law for a literary career, and was for a time engaged as sporting and agricultural editor of the "Glasgow News." From Glasgow he removed to London, where he engaged for a time in newspaper work, but latterly severed his connection with the newspaper staff and devoted his whole time to literary work on his own account. Mr Dykes has composed several lyrics of great merit. His song, "Caller Ou," was at one time very popular, and has found a permanent place in the minstrelsy of Scotland.

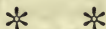
A BRIDAL THERE WILL BE.

So softly through the corridor
 My ladie's voice it rang,
 So quietly from the ha' door
 My gay young lord he sprang.
 So gallantly he held his hand,
 So gracefully she swung,
 So lightly fell the bridle reins
 That from her fingers hung.
 Full sweet the smile stole o'er her face,
 As fell her glance so free;
 It's 'ware ye o' that smile so sweet,
 And 'ware that glance so free,
 And 'ware ye no that smile so sweet,
 A bridal there will be.

So gaily by her side he rode,
 By brier and bush and bank,
 So softly by her side he spoke,
 The blushes rose and sank.

So tremulously, so pleadingly,
 So winning was his way,
 So bent he o'er her saddle low,
 She could not answer nay.
 So tenderly he pressed her lips,
 The light gleamed in his e'e.
 Its 'ware ye o' that kiss so sweet,
 And 'ware that dark blue e'e,
 And 'ware ye no that kiss so sweet—
 A bridal there will be.

With careless rein and loving mien
 They through the valley rode;
 With careless rein and loving mien
 They're halted 'neath the glade.
 O happy hearts, O happy hours,
 Of ne'er forgetful day,
 For there amid the woodlands green,
 And 'mid the hawthorn spray,
 He's spoke the word, she hangs her head—
 What answer make can she?
 And he's wooed her 'neath the saddle,
 And he's won her 'neath the tree,
 And 'ware ye no, or care ye no—
 A bridal there will be.



WILLIAM AITKEN.

We have been told to weariness that there is nothing like leather, and still we are doubtful in presence of a brandered steak. William Aitken, a native of Sorn, began to earn his living by making leather into boots and shoes under the tuition of his father, who was a worthy son of St. Crispin. Young Aitken did not believe in the idiom above quoted, and came to the finding, while yet in his teens, that leather could be beaten. He accordingly abandoned the trade of village shoemaker and entered the service of the Glasgow and South-Western Railway Company. In this service he proved himself a faithful and trustworthy person, and ultimately obtained the important post of traffic inspector on the Glasgow and Greenock section of the company's system.

His taste for learning was made manifest before leaving his native village, and his early efforts in poetry were encouraged and stimulated by the minister of his parish, who was one of the first to perceive the young poet's latent talent.

Mr Aitken all through life has maintained a warm affection for his native shades, and in one of his latest pieces has chosen for a theme the old road near the village of Catrine, and his

muse is seldom happier than when describing some old village worthies such as we find in

JEAN AND GEORDIE.

“Twa blyther bodies pair’d the warl’ never knew
 Than Geordie wi’ his kail-yaird and grannie wi’ her coo,
 Contentedly and patiently their summons hame they bide
 Within their humble dwellin’ by the wimplin’ burnside;
 Life’s brae they’ve spiel’d up han’ in han’, past the allotted span
 An’ auld, auld woman and an auld, auld man.”

In his more solemn moods Mr Aitken can give forceful expression to deeper thought.

THE SONG OF DEATH.

I come, and the children’s mirth is hushed,
 And a gloom like the night creeps on,
 For the fairest of hopes are bruised and crushed,
 And the light in that home is gone.
 I spare not the ’maid in her beautiful bloom,
 Nor the man in his martial glow,
 Though a despot, I come as a friend to some,
 While to others I come as a foe;
 And many a poor, frail, bruised thing—
 Whom the world has afflicted sore—
 I take like a chicken beneath my wing
 Where no one dare harm it more.

My harvest I gather from far and wide,
 In garret and turreted dome,
 And the peer finds a place by the pauper’s side—
 I lay them down as they come.
 And though thousands strong
 I can count my throng—
 The cry is still they come!
 Come! come! come!
 I have always a place for some.
 The journey is short and the path is clear,
 And there never came one but was welcome here,
 So be not afraid to come.

Since sin in the world at first began,
 My gates I have closed to none;
 Let them come as they can—child, woman, or man—
 I receive them every one.
 I reckon not the throbs of the bursting heart,
 Or the sorrow of them that mourn;
 For is it not written that “dust thou art,
 And to dust thou shalt return!”
 And a man may boast of his strength and skill,
 And exhibit his power of limb,
 Yet boast as he will, he will find I’m still
 Patiently waiting for him,

And though swift as a dart his bark may skim
 O'er the waves of the boundless foam,
 Like a demon grim I pounce on him
 Ten thousand miles from home.
 And though stern my call
 On some may fall,
 None dare refuse to come,
 Come! come! come!
 I am always in search for some,
 In the morning bright, in the soft twilight,
 In the sombre shades of the silent night,
 Or the noontide's bustle and hum.

By the churchyard gate I have placed in wait
 The grey-eyed old sexton grim,
 And the sombrous knell of the funeral bell
 Has a musical sound to him.
 His hair is crisp, and short, and thick,
 And is tinged like the graveyard mould,
 And the glance of his eye is keen and quick
 For a being so withered and old:
 Of the countless forms in the churchyard laid,
 Where no marble or stone appears,
 He can point out each grave and the time it was made,
 For the most of a hundred years:
 But the warmest heart must in time grow cold,
 And the merriest voice grow dumb;
 And the sexton old in his own loved mould
 At last finds his own long home.
 While the years roll on,
 As in ages gone,
 And for ages yet to come—
 Come! come! come!
 Each day must I call upon some;
 It may be soon or it may be late—
 To a young mind teeming with projects great,
 Or an old mind chilled and numb.

* * *

JOHN MACINTOSH.

The pride felt by a muser in his poetic ponderings is such that it all too frequently drives him in unpreparedness to the printer's office, and there be few scribblers who on looking backward do not regret their hasty steps, and would gladly recall at least part of the produce of their infertile invention, and hide it forever from a scrutinizing world.

John MacIntosh is one who has often experienced feelings of this kind, and when he compares his lisplings with the deep-voiced Homeric tones of the giants of song he moralizes thus:—

“My 'prentice muse is all unfit
 With bards like these to sup,
 A trivial song or two is all
 That I can muster up.”

Mr MacIntosh has nevertheless evinced from boyhood a strong liking for poetry, music, and painting, and which in later life he has developed to some extent without, however, making any of these arts his life-work.

He has devoted considerable time to violin-making, his work in this connection being favourably noticed by the Rev. W. Meredith Morris in his "British Violin Makers."

After school-days were over Mr MacIntosh entered the office of an architect and civil engineer, in Kilmarnock, and there learned the rudiments of a profession which he has practised in his native Irvine valley for about a quarter of a century.

MY FIRST GREY HAIR.

Standing before the silvered pane
 With mind reflective as the square
 Of polished plate, I feel 'twere vain
 To slight the herald of its train—
 My first grey hair.

I doubt it, half and half believe
 The truth—but still the test is there;
 The polished plate has not deceived,
 Years have assuredly achieved
 My first grey hair.

There clings it like a withered bough
 'Mid boughs that flourish green and fair;
 The bloom of youth still sets my brow,
 And vanity will scarce allow
 My first grey hair.

To think I'm only thirty-five,
 With spirits light as mountain air,
 Or birds that through the ether dive—
 I fear you have outswarmed the hive,
 My first grey hair.

Full twenty years since first I tried
 To plant a foot on fortune's stair,
 But every effort fate denied,
 My chances lessen now I've spied
 My first grey hair.

Engrossed with trifling plot and scheme,
 It makes me pause to note you there;
 "I'm growing old," and often dream
 Of airy things that lasting seem—
 My first grey hair.

dream of wealth, and fame, and might,
 And as I dream, the blinding glare
 Of Pleasure's day sinks into night;
 Would I were wiser for your sight—
 My first grey hair.

Time will not deem his beauty marred
 Whose brow is free of wrinkled care—
 Grey locks with reverence all regard,
 I'll see you're neither tanned nor tarred—
 My first grey hair.

TO A BROTHER BARD

On his recovery from a dangerous illness.

Hail! brother and bard, I greet thee as one
 Returned from the land of the setting sun.

The white steeds were yoked to the chariots of fire
 That waft sainted souls to their goal of desire.

The horsemen were ready the sun-wheels to move
 And carry thee hence to the Kingdom of Love,

Where beauty of holiness, friendship and truth,
 Bathe immortals anew in the essence of youth.

But the steeds are unyoked, and the horsemen all bright,
 Have left thee awhile in the Land of Twilight.

Hail! brother and bard, I greet thee as one
 Returned from the land of the setting sun.

BREAK, O HEART!

Break, O heart, in this breast,
 With trouble and anguish thrilled!
 Break, and be thine the rest,
 The Healer of hearts hath willed.

Break, O heart, in this breast,
 Grown weary with lapse of years!
 With langour of hopes repressed—
 The sealing of unwept tears.

Break, O heart, in this breast,
 Break, from earth's chains away;
 As dawn by the night hard-pressed
 Leaps into the arms of day.

Break, O heart, in this breast,
 Break, be His plan fulfilled—
 Who, tossed on the billows crest,
 Said "Peace," and the waves were stilled.

THE JOY OF HARVEST.

What if the year no longer glad
 With scented rose and honied bell
 Steps on its journey tired and sad,
 As to a death-doomed century's knell?

What if the balmy warmth is gone,
 And shivering herds the change declare,
 While summer birds have early flown
 To seek auspicious skies elsewhere?

New joys await th' industrious swain
 When, harvest's sweltering labours o'er,
 He views with pride the high-stack'd grain
 That swells his garner to the door;
 Such gen'rous bounties of the year
 Rejoice his heart as summer rain
 Makes glad the brook, and in his ear
 Hoar Winter twangs his trump in vain.

When Time the harvest of our deeds
 Shall reckon up, how will it stand?
 With precious grain, or worthless weeds,
 Will toilsome striving fill his hand?
 If fruitful labour we expend,
 Though work seems tangled threads and thrums,
 Our hearts shall know what joys attend
 The harvest when the reckoning comes.



WILLIAM BLANE.

To be born with Bohemian blood in one's veins may be a blessing or the reverse of a blessing, much depending upon the disposition of the possessor and the power of his will to mould circumstances and compel them to become the instruments of self-promotion. William Blane, who was born in Greenholm, Newmilns, in the parish of Galston, acknowledges having a spark or two of Bohemian fire in his veins, inasmuch as he has been no weakly stay-at-home, but a hardy, industrious, and unflinching pioneer, the field of his labours being chiefly in South Africa, where success has so closely followed his footsteps that in his case Bohemianism must be accounted an unqualified blessing. Mr Blane's parents removed to Galston when he was five years of age, and all his early associations being with this place he ranks himself a Galstonian. He received a sound, if elementary, education in Galston, but being the eldest son of a large family was early put to work. His father taught him engineering, while from his mother he imbibed a love for poetry. At the same time he attended two night classes. One was conducted by Mr M'Donald at Barr School, where he was much influenced by that classical scholar, and so intensely interested that he carried his books to the colliery where he worked, and was often caught poring over them when he should have been attending to other things. The other class was that of Mr William Ireland, who put mathematics before

everything else, and often rated him soundly for worrying over unprofitable classics to the neglect of more practical subjects. In this way, both at home and in school, influences were at work which produced the "poet-engineer," for Mr Blane is an engineer of note as well as an accomplished verse-writer, and to-day he still loves equally his profession and his art. Through a long and arduous career he has never ceased to be a contributor to various journals in Britain and South Africa, while carrying out large engineering works. His first volume, "Lays of Life and Hope" (now out of print), was published some twenty years ago, and his latest, "The Silent Land and Other Poems," in 1906, by Elliot Stock, London.

Mr Blane's poems are remarkable for fecundity and richness of thought, flowing in easy, fluent language and every line is weighed in the balance with painstaking carefulness. His poem entitled "Creation" was undertaken at the dying request of his mother, who saw part of the first book, but died before he had finished the second. After her death he had no heart to continue the work—the inspiration being lost with her.

In the closing lines of Book II. he thus mournfully soliloquizes on the sad event that paralysed his "sorrow-smitten lyre":—

Weep, lovely Eden! scenes Elysian, weep!
 Ye seraphs, guard upon my sorrow keep!
 Ye zephyrs languish! and ye rivers flow
 In muffled music to the throb of woe!
 Ye birds of Paradise forbear to sing,
 And droop awhile with me the radiant wing!
 Lament, O Earth! and ye surrounding spheres
 Distil through aching space celestial tears!
 Sun, moon, and stars, in pity o'er me bend!
 And Heav'n itself a mortal's grief attend!
 And thou, my loved, my sorrow-smitten lyre,
 Let anguish sweep thy cords and quench thy fire!
 Ye pitying Muses, ever sweet and kind,
 My throbbing brows with cypress gently bind,
 And lead me hence. I who with hope elate
 Came pressed by time, erstwhile to yonder gate,
 Would now retrace my steps in grief and fear,
 For human sorrow may not linger here.
 Yet bear me witness, O ye Powers Above!
 How hard I tried in filial faith and love
 My task to compass and my work complete,
 That I might lay it proudly at her feet,
 Hope holding out the sweet reward the while—
 A mother's blessing and approving smile.
 O gentle spirit, fled beyond the skies,
 To which my grief-embittered prayers arise!
 Thy tender pity I in sorrow crave,
 While I lay these fragments on thy grave.

THE RENUNCIATION.

AN IRISH BALLAD.*

"Be brave O Nivek of the lake—
 Be brave," she said, "and strong of heart,
 I seek the convent for thy sake;
 Go, all unhindered, play thy part!"

"I will be brave and true," cried he,
 "But leave me not I do implore!
 Fair Glendalough, if wanting thee,
 Were lone, and lone sweet Avonmore.

"Thou art their beauty and their pride,
 Their charm, their grandeur and their queen;
 No convent wall shall ever hide
 My loved and my adored Kathleen!"

"Nay, nay," she sighed, "'tis sealed above!
 For I have vowed in holy prayer
 To purge my soul from earthly love
 Where heaven shall be my only care."

E'en as she spake a sacred spell,
 Tranquil, o'er all his being stole,
 As if a god had stooped to quell
 The mighty passion of his soul.

And when he saw her saintly grace
 And marked her calm, angelic mien,
 Childlike he wept and hid his face
 Sobbing, "Alas, my lost Kathleen!"

Her eyes were of that changing blue
 Seen only where the tropic skies
 Lend to the deep that varied hue
 Which every artist's brush defies.

Her cheeks were as the richest beds
 Of rippling roses, zephyr-kissed,
 On which some amorous rainbow sheds
 Its changing glow through trembling mist.

And as the sun in ocean dips,
 Shimm'ring beneath some cloudlet's sheen,
 So seemed the coral-tinted lips
 Of the all-lovely, sweet Kathleen.

Dispassionate he clasped and kissed her;
 Fearless she answered his embrace:
 "Then, be to me," he said, "a sister,
 And let me fill a brother's place!"

"I'll love thee with a holy love,
 And guard thee with a brother's care;
 Thou'lt lead my erring thoughts above,
 And nerve my purpose with thy prayer.

"But leave me not, for Erin's Isle
 Would be no longer fair and green,
 Nor bright the heavens without thy smile,
 My loved, my beautiful Kathleen!"

Tears to her deep-fringed eyelids clung
 Trembling from Beauty's self to fall,
 While on her dreaded answer hung
 His happiness, his life, his all.

"Too late!" she said, "alas, too late!
 I am a woman, thou a man:
 I too am weak and passionate,
 And love as woman only can.

And never can a brother's part
 Be his who hath a lover been!
 The Cross will soothe my broken heart—
 Go thou, be brave—forget Kathleen!"

One kiss, one tear, one hand-clasp more,
 And each, grief-laden, turned away—
 She to the Christ her sorrow bore,
 He his unto the aching day.

Nor veil nor beads, nor book nor cell,
 Nor prayers nor tears in cloisters dim—
 Not e'en the Cross—can wholly quell
 The ling'ring, loving thought of him.

And as that cloudlet of the west
 Which basked upon the lucid scene
 Hangs black'ning now on ocean's breast,
 So broods he of the lost Kathleen,

[* NOTE.—The foregoing is another version of the loves of Kevin and Kathleen to that told by the guide books and enshrined in Moore's poem, "By that lake whose gloomy shore," and reflects greater credit on both the lady and the Saint of Glendalough. Nivek is Kevin reversed.]

LOVE'S MAGIC SPELL.

Oft I recall the moment when
 Love's magic spell first thrilled my soul;
 Entranced was all my being then—
 Thou the supreme, the one Control.

To music all my pulses beat,
 And throbbed my heart in joyous glee;
 The world lay conquered at my feet,
 For life was only full of thee.

The earth was decked with fairer flowers,
 And brighter shone the heaven above;
 Enchanted were the heedless hours,
 While all the universe breathed love.

I moved a prince, a king, a god—
Unconscious of all power but thine:
Thy will, like Joves' almighty nod,
Controlling and directing mine.

MY WORK.

Save only one, and that alone divine,
Of all the gifts which, being man, are mine.
The first, the best, the highest place is thine,
My work.

The call of labour and the voice of song
In strength and sweetness lead the life along:
Such is thy gospel pure, serene and strong,
My work.

An aimless youth, it found and taught me then
To labour honestly with spade or pen,
And led me forth to be a man with men,
My work.

'Tis this hath yielded me my daily bread,
And often calmed my heart and cooled my head,
Yea, made a plank at times an easy bed,
My work.

Passion is quickly sated, pleasures cloy,
And love is often but a sorry ploy—
Life still is bearable when I enjoy
My work.

When light and gladness favouring Fortunes send,
Or when to stern Adversity I bend,
I find my truest, most substantial friend
My work.

If every earthly good before me lay,
And I must choose which one alone should stay;
'Twere many a wrench, but I would firmly say,
My work.

If trying, so is love itself at times;
If difficult, so often are my rhymes;
If hard, no base dishonesty begrimes
My work.

When pleasant, to the winds all else I fling,
And o'er my task for very gladness sing,
Nor would I put aside, to be a king,
My work.

When at the last my earthly sands have run,
Whatever may be doubtful, lost or won,
I shall be well content if I have done
My work.

By labour, those who mould the world are made,
 Be theirs the sceptre, sabre, pen or spade,
 Their genius this—to heart and hand is laid
 Their work.

I hold that usefulness is more than fame,
 That duty has the first and final claim,
 That only knaves and cowards couple shame
 With work.

SCENES OF YOUTH.

Fond Memory ever, with unerring truth,
 Cherishes and recalls the scenes of youth,
 And every day we rove or league we roam
 Strengthens her hold upon our childhood's home.
 I've wandered long and far, but every year
 Has made that sacred spot of earth more dear,
 And every distance which is placed between
 That spot and me but vivifies the scene.
 When at the last mine eyes must close in death
 And thou would'st speed with cheer my fleeting breath,
 Remember where I spent my boyhood days,
 And speak of "Loudoun's bonnie woods and braes"
 And Irvine's banks: bring in my sister's name,
 For wanting her it could not be the same.
 And, when you point me to the Home above,
 Eternal pleasure and unchanging love,
 Think that I easiest will understand
 The images drawn from my native land.

SPIRIT-LOVE.

I met her first in the morning bright—
 Her heart was young and her footstep light.
 As we strolled along the flowery lawn
 Our souls were strangely together drawn,
 And a speechless love like a spirit-spell
 On my boyish bosom calmly fell,
 For I knew she was mine, as I know it now,
 By a bond too pure for an earthly vow!
 In that sacred hour, though our lips were dumb,
 Our lives were knit for the world to come:
 And I longed in parting, I knew not why—
 I longed in that morning hour to die.

I met her next when the clouded sun
 Full half of his weary course had run.
 The maiden had donned the matron's grace
 And hers was a mother's thoughtful face;
 I too had changed—but her girlhood name
 To my bearded lips unbidden came!
 Then a holy silence o'er us stole,
 And a greedy yearning soul to soul.
 'Twas but for an hour—how soon it fled!
 And never a word of love was said;

But I felt by instinct all divine
 That her inmost heart was true to mine!
 And we parted in silent spirit-love
 That first will be breathed in the world above.

We'll meet again when this earth day's done
 And the day of eternity begun.
 Our lives shall unite in a holy bliss
 That cannot be known in a world like this
 When the mists have fallen from our eyes
 In the spirit-land beyond the skies.
 I'll tell her then of my voiceless vow
 And the yearning love that is silent now;
 And there, when we understand and know
 The reason of all things here below,
 Our love shall be sweet, serene, and strong
 As the light of God and the angels' song.

For this we met on that morning bright;
 For this we met when the sun was high;
 For this we languish while falls the night;
 For this alone it were sweet to die!

STANZAS FROM "SEA THOUGHTS."

O cruel sea! Ungrateful sea!
 The world is mirrored well in thee.
 How oft beneath thy treacherous waves
 Thy friends and lovers find their graves!
 Deep in thy caves, with shroud and mast,
 Ten thousand shattered hopes are cast.
 They launched at *morn*—sweet was thy smile;
 At *noon* they just suspected guile;
 The *ev* showed thy treacherous might;
 They perished in the starless *night*,
 And this is life—a smiling morn,
 A doubtful noon, and evening lorn,
 A night of death. O cruel sea!
 The world is mirrored well in thee.

O careless sea! Forgetful sea!
 No tender memories are in thee.
 Lone hearts may break and nations weep
 For those thy heedless caverns keep,
 Unmoved and all forgetful still,
 Thou'rt fond and fierce and false at will.
 But yesterday I took a wand
 And wrote my name along the sand;
 I passed the spot again to-day,
 And thou hadst washed it quite away.
 And so to-day the wand of fame
 Writes on earth's sands a poet's name—
 To-morrow? O forgetful sea!
 His fate is well foretold by thee.

MY SISTER.

Her maiden name was Jeanie Blane,
 Her form was tall and slender,
 Her face had made a princess vain,
 Her eyes were blue and tender;
 But she has long been Mrs Baird,
 And had three pretty boys,
 Four years ago—when last we heard—
 In Braidwood, Illinois.
 'Tis but ten years, yet it appears
 An age since last I kissed her:
 For I must bear the growing fears
 Of having lost a sister.

How oft in childhood's happy days,
 With all a brother's pride,
 I've crowned her queen on Loudoun's braes
 With wreaths from Irvine's side!
There Spring her daisied carpet spread,
 And, tripping o'er the lea,
 Fair Summer came with laughing tread
 For sister Jean and me.
 Oh! if you know her, tell her, please,
 That I have sadly missed her;
 Help, all ye scribes across the seas,
 To find a scribbler's sister!

Ye editors of Illinois
 And all the western clime,
 If e'er ye knew a brother's joys,
 Take over this short rhyme,
 For now the summers come and go
 Not blythely as of old;
 Their days are joyless, dull and slow,
 E'en Afric's suns are cold,
 And cheerless are its brightest skies,
 It's diamonds do not glister,
 Nor are its goldfields rich to eyes
 That fill for a lost sister.

NOTE.—The above lines were published about 1887 in "Excalibur," a Cape journal, and were reproduced by many of the British and American newspapers. The desired end was gained.

AUTUMN TINTS.

I.

The gladness of Spring held a tear for us—
 The fulness of Summer a fear for us;
 But Autumn, serenely,
 Sedately and queenly,
 Comes calming and crowning the year for us.
 Now Spring, Love, and Summer, so sweet in you,

Blend, smiling, fair Autumn to greet in you,
 While Passion reposes
 Where dimples and roses
 Still linger with beauty complete in you.

II.

The Spring and the Summer were gay with us—
 They frolicked and laughed in their play with us;
 But Autumn, soft-stealing,
 Comes wooing, appealing,
 Like a love too entrancing to stay with us!
 O Love of the autumn tints cling to me—
 You are more than both summer and spring to me!
 The sweet of all sweetness,
 Fruition, completeness,
 In peerless perfection you bring to me.

SONNET: AN APRIL DAY.

Again good-bye—there's nothing more to say!
 'Tis well the loves of long ago are dead.
 The heart-ache dulled, the tear no longer shed—
 That pride and passion yield to reason's sway,
 And life's no longer like an April day
 Of changing shade and shine, but June, instead,
 Sheds roses round, with constant skies o'erhead,
 To while, dispassionate, the hours away.
 So said I—but that love of long ago
 Came rushing back a moment, and those years
 Stood forth from all the others, till the glow
 Of my false June suffused itself in tears!
That April day was heaven, well I know,
For all its fickle faith and faithless tears.

THE FIRST SABBATH MORNING.

(Selection from "Creation.")

Thou fairest, brightest, first and best of days!
 Angels with harps æolian hailed thy rays;
 Primeval flowers awoke from dewy dreams
 To swing their fragrant censors in thy beams;
 The forests murmured praise; rivers and rills
 Babbled their gladness to the gladd'ning hills.
 Winged warblers met thee, trilling forth their song
 Of happy welcome, full and sweet and strong;
 And every creature of the teeming earth
 Hailed with unconscious praise thy coming forth.
 Great Ocean hushed his voice, and at thy feet
 Rolled awful worship, vast, profound and sweet,
 While, side by side, upon his heaving breast,
 His great and small thy loveliness confessed.
 And he, the first of men, with wond'ring eyes,
 Beheld thy blushes breaking on the skies—

A myriad glinting glories paved the way,
 Flitting about thy feet in gladsome play,
 While wing-veiled seraphs led thee forth to bless
 Creation's universal loveliness.

THE FINAL PAGE.

With weary hand he laid the pen
 Beside the finished final page,
 And wondered if the eyes of men
 Would read it in some future age;
 Or if, forgotten and unread,
 The volume would oblivious lie,
 Like some lost memory of the dead
 Who lone and unremembered die.

But inly conscious of their worth,
 Though conscious of their weakness too,
 He sent the humble pages forth,
 And *slept* as weary toilers do!
 Sweet is his rest—no pen, no voice
 His slumbering heart and ear can thrill—
 But God and Time have made their choice,
 For, "being dead he speaketh still."

THEY'LL COME AGAIN.

They'll come again—the children of our sorrow
 Who sojourn now beyond our mortal ken—
 Sure as the promised dawn of God's to-morrow,
 In song and sunshine, they will come again.

They'll come again! They're safe in Love's own keeping;
 And, though unknowing how or where or when,
 The voice of Rachel for her children weeping
 Is pledge and promise they will come again.

They'll come again! Untiring æons, solving
 The myst'ries of the universe and men,
 For ever fuller, sweeter life evolving,
 Immortal fold them—they will come again.

They'll come again! On this the soul relying
 Joins, grief-impassioned, Nature's grand Amen,
 Which, harmonized by faith and hope undying
 Heav'n hearing, answers, "They shall come again."



GEORGE NEIL.

To some the day of life is one monotonous round of duties
 performed day in and day out with the regularity of an electric
 clock. Rising every morning within half a minute of the same

time, they tackle the same perpetual tasks of the day, and lie down at night to enjoy comfort and ease of mind and body, or it may be with only "the half of a broken hope for a pillow."

George Neil chose not to throw in his lot with this class, and his life has been as variant as any one need wish, and more so than to many would be desirable. Born in the village of Whiteletts, and educated at Tollcross, near Glasgow, whither his parents had removed when he was yet quite young, he first learned to earn his bread in an iron foundry, and subsequently in succession was engaged in the trade of a baker, a draper, a carrier, and a coal miner. He afterwards enlisted in the Thirteenth Prince Albert's Light Infantry Regiment, and while stationed with his regiment in East India made his first effort in the composition of verse, his subject being "How can I leave my native land?" About this same period he wrote articles for the "Madras Journal" and other Indian newspapers.

On his retiral from the army he returned to Scotland, and was for a time employed as a draper's traveller, and afterwards engaged in business on his own account as a tailor and clothier.

The following simple lyric from Mr Neil's pen seems to have been written with no other purpose than that of assuring an uncertain tribe of bachelors that married life is not wholly a species of downright misery:—

MARRIED AND SETTLED AT LAST.

Oh! lang I a bachelor was,
 And ne'er thocht o' weddin' a lassie;
 But little I kent o' the bliss
 When I ca'd a' the women folk saucy.
 For e'er sin' I've ta'en to mysel'
 A lassie, I never feel weary;
 An' I seem to be under a spell
 That mak's me keep singing fu' cheerie—
 Married an' settled at last,
 I've got a wee wifie to cheer me;
 Sae blaw, Winter, blaw yer wild blast,
 I'll never again ha'e to fear ye.

My meals an' my claes are aye clean,
 I'm keepit gae snod, an' I ken it;
 The hoose is aye like a new preen,
 Sae weel does my Katie atten' it.
 An' at nicht, when I'm dune wi' my wark,
 An' washed, an' my supper is owre,
 I feel—oh, ye single men, hark!—
 Transported to some fairy bower.
 Married an' settled at last,
 I've got a wee wifie to cheer me;
 Sae blaw, Winter, blaw yer wild blast,
 I'll never again need to fear ye.

MRS THOMSON, *NEE* MARY BOYD.

This aspirant after poetical honours is descended from a literary stock, her grandmother, whose maiden name was Margaret Howie, being the great-grand-daughter of John Howie of Lochgoin, the distinguished author of the "Scots Worthies."

Mrs Thomson was born in Mauchline, and lived part of her childhood in the house where Robert Burns began his married life with Jean Armour. When nine years of age she removed to Newmilns with her mother, where she resided till the time of her death.

Her latent poetical talents lay dormant till she was about sixteen years of age, at which time she began to write occasional verse; but the most of her work was accomplished within the last six or seven years. Her poems and songs are the spontaneous outflow of a warm and feeling nature, her themes being chiefly of a homely and pious kind. While her writings are not entirely free of blemish, several of her pieces have been considered worthy of award by competent judges, and on more than one occasion have secured for her the much coveted prize offered in competition by a Glasgow weekly newspaper.

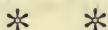
THE MINER LAD.

Down in the dark, with flickering gleam,
The miner lad pegs away,
(With ne'er a blink of a bright sunbeam
To lighten the toilsome day.
Week in, week out, from morn till noon
He works in the cold, damp earth,
With ne'er a cheery lilt of a tune
From the wild bird in its mirth;
Down, down, far below in the ground
He's toiling for all he is worth.

Bidding farewell to the light of day,
He cheerily enters the cage
That drops him down to his living tomb,
His dangerous war to wage;
Hewing the gem of ebony hue
From the rock-bound wall below,
Facing fire-damp that lurks unseen
And the treacherous flood's o'erflow;
Down, down, far below in the ground,
He's the bravest lad that I know.

By the ingle fire with ruddy glow
We sit in the pleasant heat,
With ne'er a thought of praise for him
Whose hands our wants thus meet;

While the humble miner, fathoms down,
 Toils hard in the bowels of gloom,
 And the light of the hearth with its priceless worth
 Is the gem brought out of the tomb,
 Down, down, far below in the ground:
 Let his praise through the land resound.



JAMES MACPHERSON.

There is always something regretfully sad in the premature decay of genius, and to this more readily almost than aught else we pay "the mournful tribute of our tears."

James Macpherson was born in Greenholm, Newmilns, in the Parish of Galston, and had entered on a most promising career when he fell a prey to consumption and was carried off in the twenty-sixth year of his age.

When laid aside by disease from his Divinity studies he soothed his solitary and oftentimes painful hours by the practice of Music, and by exercising his talents in the fields of Poesy. In the former he was held to be about as proficient as can be expected of any amateur musician. His serious verses are tinged with pathetic beauty and deep reflections.

A selection of his sermons and other writings was published as a memorial volume a short time after his death.

VOICE OF THE ROSE.

(Sent with a rose to three invalid brothers, helpless from birth owing to a spinal defect.)

Afflicted brothers, unto you I send
 A simple flower—accept it from a friend
 Who knows the cross of frailty you've to bear,
 And in affliction, too, has had a share.
 Plucked from its parent stem, this fragrant rose
 Is swiftly hasting to its brief life's close;
 To heart that heeds the message that it breathes,
 Rich is the legacy a dying flower bequeaths,
 Attend, and ere it's transient bloom departs,
 Learn, while it lives, the lesson it imparts:—

"I'm but a flower, but this I know,
 Though born to bloom, and fade, and die,
 'Twas heavenly wisdom made me so,
 It is not mine to question why.
 God might have made me great in power,
 And higher lot to me assigned,
 But since He willed me for a flower,
 My will was unto His resigned.

"I now appear as beauty's queen,
 Transferring to the form and of youth,
 From that who taught me how to die,
 To youth who now have made me live,
 The art is mine that the unknown
 In words of love and tenderness,
 As yet, in unassuming tone,
 The unknown heart hath taught me to show.

"I've taught beauty the unknown's light,
 And taught it, with my gentle voice,
 To make love in the unknown's light,
 My heart's sweetest light with gentle
 I've taught beauty the unknown's light
 In words of love and tenderness,
 As yet, in unassuming tone,
 The unknown heart hath taught me to show.

"I've taught the unknown's sweetest light,
 And taught it, with my gentle voice,
 I've taught the unknown's sweetest light,
 That love is my heart's light,
 I've taught it in the unknown's light,
 And taught it, with my gentle voice,
 I've taught the unknown's sweetest light,
 That love is my heart's light.

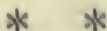
"I've taught the unknown's sweetest light,
 And taught it, with my gentle voice,
 I've taught the unknown's sweetest light,
 That love is my heart's light,
 I've taught it in the unknown's light,
 And taught it, with my gentle voice,
 I've taught the unknown's sweetest light,
 That love is my heart's light.

"Yet, 'neath a smiling face I've seen,
 And seen my heart's light in my heart,
 With words of love, I've seen in me,
 Sweetest, sweetest, sweetest, all my heart,
 The one, the true, the true, the true,
 With words of love, I've seen in me,
 Sweetest, sweetest, sweetest, all my heart,
 The one, the true, the true, the true.

"My heart's light, my heart's light, my heart's light,
 And seen my heart's light in my heart,
 With words of love, I've seen in me,
 Sweetest, sweetest, sweetest, all my heart,
 The one, the true, the true, the true,
 With words of love, I've seen in me,
 Sweetest, sweetest, sweetest, all my heart,
 The one, the true, the true, the true.

"Oh happy heart, heart, heart, heart, heart,
 And seen my heart's light in my heart,
 With words of love, I've seen in me,
 Sweetest, sweetest, sweetest, all my heart,
 The one, the true, the true, the true,
 With words of love, I've seen in me,
 Sweetest, sweetest, sweetest, all my heart,
 The one, the true, the true, the true."

The lowliest flowers most beauty oft possess,
 And humblest souls the highest happiness.
 To life the frailest mortal can impart
 Rich fragrance from a consecrated heart—
 A heart whose redolent and beauteous grows
 The flower divine and fair—sweet Sharon's Rose.



JOHN H. GREENE.

The poems and prose writings of John H. Greene reflect much individuality, and show that mother wit has graciously bestowed on him the gift of light humour in no stinted measure. But it must not be imagined that his vein is humorous only, for he can write grave and didactic poems of much beauty as well as verse of a playful kind. When he chooses to write in the light vein his muse is frothingly flippant but conspicuously clever, while in its graver moods it gives way to retrospective dreamfulness and passionate yearning for hopes and joys that can never be recalled.

Mr Greene is the son of a colliery underground manager, and was born in Galston, where for a short time he engaged in the coal mining industry; but when barely emerged from his teens he resolved upon trying his fortunes in sunny Australia. Arrived in the land of his adoption, after various wanderings over a large portion of Victoria and some parts of New South Wales, he was commissioned by the Editor of a Queensland journal to write up a series of articles on the vineyards of Victoria. After visiting several vineyards of Victoria he returned to Melbourne with the view of preparing his notes for the press, when, unfortunately, he was prostrated by sun-stroke, and was compelled to undergo three months' treatment in an hospital. On being discharged, his health was so feeble that he determined to return to Scotland.

The homeward voyage completely established his convalescence, and he once more took up the pen, contributing papers on his colonial experiences to the Ayrshire press, as well as short tales and poems.

For a number of years Mr Greene has been settled in Newmilns as a printer, stationer, and tobacconist. He is editor and publisher of a brightly conducted weekly paper, styled "The Irvine Valley News."

We give two specimens of Mr Greene's muse in its graver mood and one in lighter vein:—

THE LOVE OF LONG AGO.

The wintry sky is flushed,
 The dull, discordant hum
 Of busy life is hushed,
 The silent hours have come;
 And gleaming from afar,
 Beyond this world of sin,
 One lonely little star
 My window pane peeps in.

Like some remembered dream,
 A long forgotten thought,
 From some unfinished theme,
 On which of old I wrought;
 With footfall soft and light,
 With measured tread and slow,
 Steals o'er my soul to-night,
 My love of long ago.

To-night my soul holds sway:
 Yet, dreamful as my mood,
 One chord alone will play
 Here in my solitude—
 The spring-tide song of birds,
 The streamlet's murmur low,
 The fond and foolish words
 Of love's sweet long ago.

Again the thrill of bliss,
 The ardent vow of youth;
 Again the raptured kiss,
 From lips of stainless truth,
 I seem to feel her breath
 Glow warm upon my cheek—
 I seem, unrobbed by death
 To-night to hear her speak.

From out the shattered past,
 With all its bitter tears,
 My soul to-night holds fast
 The love of other years.
 O'er memory's twilight fields
 With thoughts the heart may know,
 Like incense sweet it steals—
 My love of long ago.

A NEW-YEAR'S HYMN.

Another short year has departed,
 And another already begun;
 Ah, how many old faces who started,
 The woof of their weaving have spun?
 And the weaver's cold fingers are done.

Impell'd by those hopes we all cherish
To make the world better for men,
Or seeking the riches that perish,
They're dropped from our sight and our ken,
And life will ne'er know them again.

Ah! who can foretel what's before us,
What's hid in futurity's womb?
For He alone knoweth who's o'er us,
If sunshine, or shadow, or gloom—
If marching to joy or the tomb.

A year with its sunshine and sorrow—
Do you ever stare life in the face?
With its simple to-day and to-morrow,
And death drawing nearer each pace—
Some one missed each day in the race.

What makes up the span of existence?
Brief moments unmask'd in their flight,
Brave deeds and unswerving resistance
To all that's obscuring the light—
Devotion to truth and the right.

Look back on the year and its sinning,
And thus when your thoughts have been cast
Make better the year now beginning,
By shunning the follies of last;
For we may not recall what is past.

See! beckoning onward and ever,
The days that shall number the year;
There are many kind words to deliver
And many sad hearts we may cheer—
God makes duty's path ever clear.

For yester-year's only true pleasures
Are noble deeds faithfully done;
Something the conscience may treasure,
Some good work in earnest begun—
Some victory worthily won.

THE CHARMER FROM THE HYDROPATHIC.

Enamoured with a passing glance
Bestowed, I thought, so very kindly,
I asked the charming girl to dance,
And oh, the creature danced divinely.
We tripped across the polished floor,
Her hand in mine—'twas bliss ecstatic;
I've loved her now a week and more
That charmer from the Hydropathic.

I've written sonnets to her eyes,
And burned for her the midnight taper;
In fact I've told the usual lies,
And vow'd eternal love—on paper.

And should perchance love's tender glow
 Begin to sputter in its socket,
 'Tis consolation sweet to know
 I've got her photo in my pocket.

Ah! witching girl what would I give?
 Though here I own my fortune's slender;
 Just one more week again to live—
 A captive to thy glances tender.
 It may not be, for fate's unkind,
 But still I swear it most emphatic
 I'll love you till—well, till I find
 Some other at the Hydropathic.



MATTHEW ANDERSON.

It will be obvious to all students of poetry that the Muse is no respecter of trades or professions, but showers her favours on whomsoever she wills, no matter what their calling may be.

It would seem, however, that she does favour certain callings more than others, the school teachers and handloom weavers of Ayrshire coming in for an extra large share of her bounties, while to policemen and ploughmen she only stoops once in a while, as in the case of Matthew Anderson, the policeman-poet of Symington, and Robert Burns, the ploughman-poet of Mossgiel.

Mr Anderson, like the great Ayrshire lyrist, began his work-a-day life as a farm hand. He abandoned farm work at an early age, however, and engaged in the Scotch drapery trade, which in turn he abandoned and threw in his lot with the Royal Marines, putting in a term of three years as a gunner. About twenty-five years ago he joined the Ayrshire Constabulary, so that from the day when he first saw the light in Waterside—the village of his birth—till the present time he has reaped a fairly broad and sympathetic knowledge of the world, as manifested in some of the best of his poems and lyrics.

NUMBER NINE.

Wee tender thing, thou art sae fine
 Compared wi' this rough form o' mine,
 Fresh frae the Hands o' the Divine
 Thou com'st to me;
 Then welcome hame, wee Number Nine;
 I'm prood o' thee.

On Mother's breast thou'rt snug and warm
 (And thou has't gi'en her back youth's charm),
 Then roar awa', ye bitter storm

O' sleety rain,
 Mother will shield the lovely form
 O' her wee wean.

The ither bairns were maist struck dumb,
 And some looked glad and some looked glum,
 But syne they asked "hoo did he come?"

"Is he for keepin'?"
 "Did Santy bring him doon the lum
 When we were sleepin'?"

Ye statisticians, wha declare
 That Scottish births are gettin' rare,
 Ye'll no say but I've got my share,
 O' these wee tots.

For I ha'e noo nine diel-ma-care
 Wee sturdy Scots.

And tho' my wage can hardly stan'
 To keep anither wee bit man,
 I'll do the very best I can

To get him brose;
 And that will gi'e him strength o' bran
 To face his foes.

For here he'll find baith foes and friends,
 And lots o' ither go-betweens,
 Wha'll stick to him while he has means
 And a' is gay.

But should misfortune change his scenes,
 They'll melt away.

But och, why should I rhyme or rave,
 Or shake my heid, and look sae grave?
 For wi' a crust amang the lave,

And guid pease brose in plenty,
 He'll maybe grow up good and brave—
 A blessing to his country.

WALLACE TOWER, CRAIGIE, AYRSHIRE.

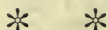
Behold that Tower on Craigie Hill;
 Behold it, and with reverence gaze;
 'Twill give your heart a glorious thrill
 To think of those heroic days
 When Scotland groaned beneath her foes,
 And vile dissensions pierced her through,
 The brave Sir William Wallace rose,
 And shewed what one great man could do.

High up on top of Craigie Hill,
 'Gainst wild Atlantic storms it stands,
 Strong emblem of that iron will
 That burst the proud usurper's bands.

And now when men for freedom yearn,
 Or struggle 'neath a tyrant's yoke.
 For strength of heart and mind they turn
 To Wallace, and his shade invoke.

That night when fast from Ayr he fled,
 And made his foes his vengeance feel,
 He halted here, looked down, and said :
 "Ye Barns o' Ayr, burn weel! burn weel!"
 What scenes those days of Wallace yield,
 What blood and tears, and what despair,
 Among these lovely fertile fields
 Between Kilmarnock and auld Ayr.

Again behold that lofty Tower,
 And think of him who faltered not,
 Till o'er thy soul there falls a shower
 Of Scottish feelings—burning hot.
 Here stood the man who stemmed the flood,
 The purest patriot e'er drew breath,
 Who set on fire our fathers' blood,
 And sealed our freedom with his death.



FRANCIS HOOD.

"There are three aristocracies," says Schopenhauer, "the first of birth and rank, the second of wealth, the third, and really the most honoured, of intellect."

Francis Hood, who is a native of Ayr, can boast neither of rank nor wealth, and we therefore class him in the most honoured aristocracy which is that of intellect. His opportunities of school education were such as are common to persons in his station of life, and after leaving the care of the dominie he served a term of instruction to the trade of carpet weaving, first in Ayr, and afterwards in Paisley. This calling he abandoned after a few years' trial, and returning to Ayr, set about learning the trade of shoemaking, at which he wrought for a time in Ayr, and subsequently in Maybole. Outdoor work being, however, more to his liking, he afterwards entered the service of the Glasgow and South-Western Railway Company, in due time became a stoker, and at length passed the examination at Kilmarnock for an engine-driver. During his term of service with the railway company the great strike took place, and although reinstated afterwards, Mr Hood remained only about a year longer in the service, the Ayr Electric Corporation Works being the next scene of his labours. Finally, he reverted to his old trade of shoemaking, and is presently in the employment of Messrs A. Cuthbert & Sons, Ayr.

The lineage from which our poet descends is deserving of some comment. His great grandfather, Francis Hood, was not only an ardent admirer of Burns, but one of the best expositors of Scotland's National Poet. He was, moreover, Thom's model for Souter Johnnie, and, in company with Mr Auld, travelled through England, Scotland, and Ireland exhibiting the statues of Tam o' Shanter and Souter Johnnie and reciting the poems of Burns. In this capacity he had the honour of appearing before King George in London, and he and his friend had the satisfaction of raising about £5000 towards the fund for erecting Alloway Monument, of which Hood was afterwards appointed the first caretaker. We transcribe the two following pieces by Francis Hood as fair samples of the untutored art.

HOMEWARD BOUND.

With joke and song o'er the sparkling foam
 Our gallant barque we steer;
 Each knot we make brings us nearer home
 And friends we love so dear.
 Our hearts aglow with pleasant dreams,
 Such scenes to meet our view;
 What yarns we'll spin of what we've done,
 And what we mean to do.
 Ye ho! my jolly tars, ye ho!

Now e'er yon sun has sunk below
 Our barque that well is manned,
 If prospects clear and fair winds blow,
 Should touch our native land.
 Then slack each reef if reef there be,
 Let loose to every swell,
 And tack with skill the foaming sea,
 Through love for home and Nell.
 Ye ho! my jolly tars, ye ho!

Hope's golden beacon guides the tar,
 And love his bosom fills
 As now with joy he views afar
 His native rising hills.
 Once safe within the harbour bar,
 Our barque in berth hung tight,
 We'll drink a health 'mid rope and spar
 To home and beauty bright.
 Ye ho! my jolly tars, ye ho!

LINES SUGGESTED ON THE OCCASION OF MAJOR-
 GENERAL SIR ARCHIBALD HUNTER LEAVING
 SCOTLAND.

Bright the glare of martial glory
 That surrounds thy noble name;
 Nations echo forth that story
 As they mark thy rising fame.

Scotland looks with pride upon you,
Proud of such a noble son;
Well you've won a country's honour
Dear to her by what you've done.

Home again to bonnie Scotland
Crown'd with honour and success!
May the work that lies before you
Never fail—to make it less.

Health promote its great advancements,
God be with you where you be;
And in battle's stern engagements
Keep you safe on land or sea.
This, a country's wish, go with you:
This, a country's hope and aim:
Then, when called from active service,
Safe we wish you back again.

Home again to bonnie Scotland, etc.

LATER AND MODERN POETS OF
AYRSHIRE.

BOOK II.—CONTINUED.

PART II.—THE POETS OF CARRICK FROM THE
REV. HAMILTON PAUL TILL THE PRESENT
DAY.

REV. HAMILTON PAUL.

The Carrick Division of Ayrshire, which lies south of the "Banks and braes o' bonnie Doon," is much more sparsely populated than either Kyle or Cuninghame. Hence the poets of Carrick are a small minority in comparison with the numbers who hail from the two latter divisions. Nevertheless, Carrick, which is, perhaps, the most romantic portion of Ayrshire, has not been entirely forsaken of the muses. Its few minstrels have acquitted themselves admirably, and have thereby added fresh evergreens to the poetic laurels of Ayrshire. First in point of time among the poets of Carrick is Hamilton Paul, who was born in a cottage, now removed, but which occupied a site on the "Butler's Brae," near to the mansion-house of Bargany, in the parish of Dailly. Hamilton Paul was educated for the Church, and while attending the college classes had the good fortune to be a fellow-student of Thomas Campbell, the poet. At this point of his career it seemed a doubtful question whether the Carrick bard or his fellow-poet would win the most enduring laurels, for Hamilton Paul, even then, attracted the favourable notice of the professorial staff by reason of his poetic effusions. Unfortunately for the credit of Carrick, his Pegasus proved short-winded, and his rival eventually carried off the palm of victory. Mr Paul's first pulpit appointment was as assistant to a parish minister in Ayr, and while thus engaged he devoted part of his time to newspaper work on the staff of the "Ayr Advertiser," of which paper he was some time editor and joint-proprietor.

About this period he contributed many poetical effusions to the press and became widely known as a ready-wit and an extempore poet. He was ordained eventually to the charge of Broughton parish, in Peebles-shire, and as a sample of his witty ways it is recorded that when he had resolved to leave Ayr for good and all he intimated a farewell evening sermon to the young ladies of Ayr, choosing for his text the words, "And they all wept sore and fell upon Paul's neck."

In everything pertaining to Robert Burns the reverend gentleman took a warm and active interest. He was poet-laureate of the first Burns club, which met annually at Alloway Cottage, and for eighteen years in succession he composed anniversary odes, which were recited at the annual gatherings of the club.

On a certain occasion, when the destruction of the "Auld Brig o' Doon" was threatened by the Road Trustees, the reverend poet penned a poetical petition which was presented

to the authorities, and by this timely intervention the classic old structure was saved from destruction. For this service alone the Rev. Hamilton Paul's memory should be revered by all true admirers of our National Poet.

The following verses are from one of Mr Paul's Anniversary Odes, and will give readers some idea of his poetic skill:—

* * * * *

Ye sacred groves, ye silver streams,
That glitter to the sunny beams,

Your lov'd retreats we choose:
To sing of him who bids you show
A brighter verdure, as you blow,
A sweeter murmur, as you flow,

In his enchanting muse.
Ye woods that grace his Coila's plain,
Ye bloom and fade, and bloom again;
But in his deathless verse portray'd,
Ye blossom never more to fade.

Still Spring, with hyacinthine bell,
Shall grace the green groves of Rozelle,
And Summer, with bewitching smile,
Bloom round the borders of Belleisle.
And that lov'd stream, bless'd by his song,

In soft meanders glide,
The Braes of Allowa' among
Or woodlands of Doonside.

Still honest men and maidens fair
Shall tread the bonnie banks of Ayr,
And th' annual tributary lay,
With willing hearts to him we'll pay,
Whose ardent soul and polished mind
Restored the purity of song
(Degraded and debased so long),
And love's soft dialect refined!

Who bade the youthful Scottish swain
Breathe from his soul a purer strain,
Expressive of love's joy or woe,
Than ever yet was heard to flow
From shepherd on Arcadian plain!
Who taught the ruddy rural lass
When May-morn gems the dewy grass,
As, bending o'er her milking pail,
To pour her soft notes on the gale—
Notes that a Vestal well might hear,
And notes that would have charm'd the ear,
And claim'd the sympathetic tear
Of Petrarch in Vacluse's vale!

Happy could I ascend on equal wing,
And soaring high with equal vigour sing,
Then Doon should roll more rapidly his floods,
Ayr more majestic wander through his woods.

Belovéd streams, where'er my footsteps roam
 Your grateful murmurs seem to call me home;
 By fancy led I linger in your shades,
 And gaze enamour'd on your lovely maids—
 Review your palaces and wizard towers,
 And tread again your honeysuckle bowers.

O, that the loved Bard, ere his spirit was flown,
 Ere he bade a short life of misfortune adieu,
 Wide over my shoulders his mantle had thrown,
 I'd have breath'd a strain worthy of him and of you!
 But alas! cold forever's the soul-kindling fire,
 Mute the tongue that could captivate, ravish, inspire,
 While the hands of the feeble awaken the lyre,
 And the Muses sigh out, "our adorers are few."

Yet many a one, whose kindred soul
 Glows with congenial fire,
 As years on years successive roll,
 Will gathering round the mantling bowl,
 In ecstasy admire
 That matchless magnitude of mind,
 That feeling heart, that taste refined,
 That self-taught art sublime,
 Which bid the cottage tenant rise
 Th' ennobled favourite of the skies,
 Whose heaven-sent laurel crown defies
 The withering touch of time!

* * * * *

Ye rivers that have roll'd your tide,
 Since time began to run,
 Whose waters will perennial glide
 Coeval with the sun,
 When we shall yield, as yield we must,
 To fate, and mingle with the dust,
 On you shall future beauties bloom,
 And fresh flowers yearly shed perfume,
 And other Bards, profuse of praise,
 Delight your echoes with their lays,
 And other friends to merit fled
 Here pay due honours to the dead,
 And as they fan the gen'rous flame
 Immortalize the Poet's name!

We append two specimens of Mr Paul's lyrical style:—

HELEN GRAY.

Fair are the fleecy flocks that feed
 On yonder heath-clad hills,
 Where wild meandering crystal Tweed
 Collects his glassy rills.
 And sweet the buds that scent the air,
 And deck the breast of May;
 But none of these are sweet or fair
 Compared to Helen Gray.

You see in Helen's face so mild,
 And in her bashful mien,
 The winning softness of the child,
 The blushes of fifteen.
 Her 'witching smile, when prone to go,
 Arrests me, bids me stay;
 Nor joy, nor comfort, can I know
 When reft of Helen Gray.

May never Envy's venom'd breath
 Blight thee, thou tender flower!
 And may thy head ne'er droop beneath
 Affliction's chilling shower!
 Though I the victim of distress
 Must wander far away;
 Yet, till my dying hour, I'll bless
 The name of Helen Gray.

THE BONNIE LASS OF BARR.

Of streams that down the valley run,
 Or through the meadow glide,
 Or glitter to the summer sun,
 The Stinshar is the pride.
 'Tis not his banks of verdant hue,
 Though famed they be afar;
 Nor grassy hill, nor mountain blue,
 Nor flow'r bedropt with diamond dew;
 'Tis she that chiefly charms the view,
 The bonnie Lass of Barr.

When rose the lark on early wing,
 The vernal tide to hail,
 When daisies deck'd the breast of spring,
 I sought her native vale.
 The beam that gilds the evening sky,
 And brighter morning star,
 That tells the king of day is nigh,
 With mimic splendour vainly try
 To reach the lustre of thine eye,
 Thou bonnie Lass of Barr.

The sun behind yon misty isle
 Did sweetly set yestreen;
 But not his parting dewy smile
 Could match the smile of Jean.
 Her bosom swell'd with gentle woe,
 Mine strove with tender war,
 On Stinshar's banks while wild woods grow!
 While rivers to the ocean flow,
 With love of thee my heart shall glow,
 Thou bonnie Lass of Barr.

HEW AINSLIE.

When Hamilton Paul first arrived in the little cottage near Bargany it was scarcely expected that he would blossom into a poet with a voice tuned to the praises of Robert Burns. Much less was it expected that ere twenty years should elapse a second and greater than he would be born in the same cottage. By singular coincidence this actually took place. Hew Ainslie is one of the few Carrick poets who have added enduring laurels to the muse of Ayrshire. His education was begun at home and continued at Ballantrae parish school and at Ayr Academy. As he grew up a somewhat delicate lad he was first put to learn outdoor work as assistant nurseryman in the Bargany gardens, but while still in his teens he removed with his father to Roslin, near Edinburgh, and in the Scottish Metropolis young Ainslie found employment as clerk in the Register Office, and acted also for a short time as amanuensis to Professor Dugald Stewart.

In 1822 he emigrated to America, having previously married a cousin of his own, Janet Ainslie by name. In America he launched out into several commercial concerns, trying in turn farming, building, and brewing, but without attaining to any great measure of success.

Before leaving his native country he made a tour through Carrick with a companion, and an account of this trip he published under the title of "A Pilgrimage to the Land of Burns," incorporating into it some of his best poetical effusions. After revisiting his native land he returned to America, and died at Louisville, where some of his family ultimately established a lucrative business in the iron trade.

Ainslie's poems exhibit striking originality and picturesqueness, pawky Scottish humour, and touching pathos. One of his songs, "The Rover of Loch Ryan," has been adjudged by competent critics to be one of the finest sea songs ever written.

THE ROVER O' LOCHRYAN.

The Rover o' Lochryan he's gane
 Wi' his merry men sae brave;
 Their hearts are o' steel, an' a better keel
 Ne'er bowled owre the back o' a wave.

It's no' when the loch lies dead in its trough,
 When naething disturbs it ava',
 But the rack an' the ride o' the restless tide,
 Or the splash o' the grey sea-maw;

It's no' when the yawl an' the light skiffs crawl
 Owre the breist o' the siller sea,
 That I look to the west for the bark I lo'e best,
 An' the Rover that's dear to me.

But when that the clud lays its cheek to the flood,
 An' the sea lays its shouther to the shore,
 When the win' sings high, an' the sea-whaups cry,
 As they rise frae the whitening roar—

It's then that I look through the thickening rook,
 An' watch by the midnight tide;
 I ken the wind brings my Rover hame
 On the sea that he glories to ride.

O merry he sits 'mang his jovial crew,
 Wi' the helm-heft in his hand,
 An' he sings aloud to his boys in blue,
 As his e'e's upon Galloway's land.

"Unstint an' slack each reef an' tack,
 Gi'e her sail, boys, while it may sit—
 She has roar'd through a heavier sea afore,
 An' she'll roar through a heavier yet."

When landsmen sleep, or wake an' creep,
 In the tempest's angry moan
 We dash through the drift, and sing to the lift
 O' the wave that heaves us on.

It's brave, boys, to see the morn's blythe e'e,
 When the night's been dark and drear;
 But it's better far to lie, wi' our storm-locks dry,
 In the bosom o' her that is dear.

"Gi'e her sail, gi'e her sail, till she buries her wale;
 Gi'e her sail, boys, while it may sit—
 She has roared through a heavier sea afore,
 An' she'll roar through a heavier yet."

MARY.

It's dowie in the hint o' hairst
 At the wa' gang o' the swallow,
 When the winds grow cauld, when the burns grow bauld,
 An' the wuds are hingin' yellow;
 But, oh! it's dowier far to see
 The wa' gang o' her the heart gangs wi'—
 The deadset o' a shining e'e
 That darkens the weary warl' on thee.

There was meikle love atween us twa—
 Oh! twa could ne'er be fonder;
 An' the thing on yird was never made
 That could ha'e gar'd us sunder;

But the way o' Heaven's aboon a' ken—
 An' we maun bear what it likes to sen'—
 It's comfort, though to weary men
 That the warst o' this warl's waes maun en'.

There's mony things that come an' gae—
 Just kent an' just forgotten—
 An' the flowers that busk a bonnie brae
 Gin anither year lie rotten;
 But the last look o' that lovely e'e,
 An' the dying grip she ga'e to me,
 They're settled like eternity—
 O, Mary, that I were wi' thee!

DAFT DAYS.

"The midnight hour is clinking, lads,
 An' the douce an' the decent are winking, lads,
 Sae I tell ye again, be't weel or ill ta'en,
 It's time ye were quitting your drinking, lads!

"Gae ben an' mind your gantry, Kate,
 Gi'es mair o' your beer an' less bantry, Kate;
 For we vow whar we sit, that afore we shall flit,
 We'll be better acquaint wi' your pantry, Kate.

"The daft days are but beginning, Kate,
 An' we've sworn (wad ye ha'e us be sinning, Kate?)
 By our faith an' our houp, we shall stick by the stoup
 As lang as a barrel keeps rinnin', Kate.

"Through spring an' through simmer we moil it, Kate;
 Through hay an' through harvest we toil it, Kate;
 Sae ye ken whan the wheel is beginning to squeal
 It's time for to grease or to oil it, Kate.

"Then score us anither drappy, Kate;
 An' gi'e us a cake to our cappy, Kate;
 For, by spigot an' pin, it were mair than a sin
 To flit when we're sittin' sae happy, Kate."

SIR ARTHUR AND LADY ANNE.

Sir Arthur's foot is on the sand,
 His boat wears in the wind,
 An' he's turn'd him to a fair foot-page
 Was standing him behind.

"Gae hame, gae hame, my bonnie boy,
 An' glad your mither's e'e,
 I ha'e left anew to weep an' rue,
 Sae there's nane maun weep for thee.

"An' tak' this to my father's ha',
 An' tell him I maun speed:
 There's fifty men in chase o' me,
 An' a price upon my head.

"An' bear this to Dunelly's towers,
Where my love Annie's gane;
It is a lock o' my brown hair,
Girt wi' the diamond stane."

"Dunellie' he has dochters five,
An' some o' them are fair;
Sae how will I ken thy true love
Amang sae mony there?"

"Ye'll ken her by the stately step
As she gaes up the ha';
Ye'll ken her by the look o' love
That peers out owre them a'.

"Ye'll ken her by the braid o' goud
That spreads o'er her e'e-bree;
Ye'll ken her by the red, red cheek,
When ye name the name o' me.

"That cheek should lain on this breist-bane—
That hame should be my ha';
Our tree is bow'd, our flow'r is dow'd—
Sir Arthur's an outlaw."

He sigh'd an' turn'd him right about,
Where the sea lay braid an' wide;
It's no' to see his bonnie boat,
But a watery cheek to hide.

The page has doff'd his feather'd cap,
Put off his raven hair;
An' out there cam' the yellow locks
Like swirls o' the gouden wair.

Syne he's undone his doublet clasp—
'Twas o' the grass-green hue—
An' like a lily frae the pod,
A lady burst in view.

"Tell out thy errand now, Sir Knight,
Wi' thy love-tokens a';
If I e'er rin against my will,
It shall be at a lover's ca'."

Sir Arthur turned him round about,
E'en as the lady spak',
An' thrice he dighted his dim e'e,
An' thrice he stepped back.

But ae blink o' her bonnie e'e,
Out spake his Lady Anne!
An' he's catch'd her by the waist sae sma',
Wi' the gripe o' a drowning man.

"O! Lady Anne, thy bed's been hard,
When I thought it the down!
O! Lady Anne, thy love's been deep,
When I thought it was flown.

"I've met my love in the green wood—
 My foe on the brown hill;
 But I ne'er met wi' aught before
 I liked sae weel—an' ill.

O! I could mak' a queen o' thee,
 An' it would be my pride;
 But, Lady Anne, it's no' for thee
 To be an outlaw's bride."

"Ha'e I left kith an' kin, Sir Knight,
 To turn about an' rue?
 Ha'e I shar'd win' an' weet wi' thee
 That I maun leave thee now?

"There's goud an' siller in this han'
 Will buy us mony a rig;
 There's pearlins in this other han'
 A stately tower to big.

"Though thou'rt an outlaw frae this lan',
 The world's braid an' wide—
 Make room, make room, my merry men,
 For young Sir Arthur's bride!"



JOHN TAYLOR, M.D.

Some one has described man as

"An infant crying in the night,
 An infant crying for the light,
 And with no language but a cry,"

and we sometimes have thought this description especially applicable to the class of persons known as "Reformers," but with this difference that reformers of the right radical sort not only cry louder than most other babies but kick and wriggle for all they are worth till old Mother Jog-along-in-the-same-old-style yields to their vociferous entreaties and soothes them with a draught from the wished for sucking bottle. John Taylor, who was born at Newark Castle, in the parish of Maybole, was a reformer first and a poet afterwards. As a reformer he was one of the ablest kickers and wrigglers of his time, and stood before all comers as a lighter of the torch of liberty, a bold champion, and a staunch upholder of the civic rights and privileges of the people of Ayr. For his public services the inhabitants of Ayr rewarded him, posthumously, by erecting a statue to his memory in the Wallacetown Cemetery. After retiring from the political field Dr Taylor devoted his leisure hours to the composition of "Christian Lyrics," which were

published by M'Glashan, Dublin, in 1851. The lyrics do credit to the author's heart, but do not add any lustre to the Ayrshire muse.

BEAUTY IN NATURE.

Vain mortal! though the smile of Nature brings
To thee no pleasure; still in every face,
In every floweret in the vale that springs,
In every little warbler there that sings,
God's mighty hand you trace.

And would'st thou other songs than Nature's song,
Swelling in thousand notes among the trees;
Go join the heartless, despicable throng
From infancy to crime who sweep along,
And dwell with these.

For me though broken-hearted, I could find
One pleasure in the broken mountain peak,
Leaving earth's grovelling hopes and fears behind,
And borne on fancy's wing, the immortal mind
With God can speak.

Heaven's wildest notes are music to my ear,
The rushing tempest and the roaring sea,
The fiery lightning darting through the sphere,
The thundering voice that others trembling hear
Have charms for me.



ANDREW GLASS.

"'Tis education forms the common mind,
Just as the twig is bent the tree's inclined."

When Andrew Glass was a sapling the educational opportunities offered to young people were few and inadequate, and the tree was allowed to grow up pretty much according to its own inclination. Young Glass was fortunate, however, in getting access to a circulating library in his native town, otherwise it is doubtful if ever he would have blossomed into a poet or essayist. Mr Glass, who was born in Girvan, began his literary career by contributing poetical pieces to the Ayrshire newspapers. Some of his effusions were favourably noticed by Hugh Macdonald, and in course of time the Girvan bard obtained an appointment on the staff of the "Ayr Observer," and in later life was engaged on one of the Glasgow weekly newspapers.

The poet's deep love for nature is freely expressed in the following lines:—

BEAUTIFUL MAY.

Vocal as ever with music and mirth,
 May has returned to beautify earth—
 Joyously tripping o'er moorland and green,
 Scattering gifts like a beautiful queen,
 Breathing her fragrance through wild wood and dell,
 Shedding rich sunshine on mountain and fell!
 How the green hedge-rows their rich robes display,
 Fresh from the fingers of beautiful May.

Shaking the bright dew's of earth from his wings,
 The lav'rock with ecstasy heavenward springs;
 Over the streamlet the swift swallows skim,
 Trying to twitter like others a hymn.
 Humming and working the bees are abroad,
 Where the bright blossoms in myriads nod;
 Meadows appear like the sky's milky way,
 Garnished with gowans by beautiful May.

Into the ravine the sun sends his beams,
 Drying the beds of the dark mountain streams;
 Making the rivers that none dared to ford
 Shallow, and bright as a silvery cord.
 Beautiful flowers in festoons are hung
 O'er the bleak rocks where the fleet waters sung;
 Lowly the cataract now seems to say—
 "Thrice are ye welcome back, beautiful May."

Come from the city, and share the soft breeze,
 Sighing and dying among the green trees;
 Sweet is the music that rings through the grove,
 Breathing of harmony, innocence, love.
 Come to the shade of the fern-fringed rock,
 Where the blythe shepherd is tending his flock,
 And sadness will flee from your heart far away,
 When breathing the incense of beautiful May.



REV. ROBERT CAMPBELL.

The Rev. Robert Campbell is a son of the farmhouse, who in childhood was sent from the rural shades of his native parish of Barr to be brought up under the care of his grandfather, a farmer in Waterhead, New Cumnock. Leaving Cumnock district when about seventeen years of age he enrolled himself a student at the University of Glasgow, and in course of time was appointed minister of Canon Street United Presbyterian Church, Glasgow. About two years later he accepted a call to a London church, where he ministered for a few years, at the end of which time he returned to Glasgow and was ordained to the charge of Calton United Presbyterian Church.

The poet-preacher wields a ready and fluent pen. His muse is not only luminous but voluminous, and he fully justifies his title of Bard to the Clan Campbell Society. His chief poetical work is a sacred drama, entitled "Jezebel," but his subjects are many and various. The following pieces were kindly placed at our disposal by the author for use in this work.

THE KING'S CUP-BEARER.

"For I was the King's Cup-bearer."—Neh. i., 2.

Not in halls of regal splendour,
Where the rich and great recline;
Not arrayed in costly vesture,
Handing up the ruby wine;
Not where music breathes its softest
O'er the fairest in the land,
Saw I this noble servant,
The King's Cup-bearer stand!
Where the sinner conscience-stricken,
Shrank away in his disgrace—
As if from sight of earth and heaven,
He would hide his sinful face,
Where the weary feet were bleeding,
On the rough highways of life;
Where the weary heart was breaking,
In the unavailing strife.
Where the brow was wet with anguish,
From the never ceasing pain;
Where disease had seized its victim,
And the healing art was vain.
There I saw the King's Cup-bearer,
God's messenger of grace!
As he stepped out from the palace,
With its light upon his face;
Hope was written on his forehead,
Love was beaming from his eye,
As he moved among the hapless,
And the stricken, soon to die;
As he opened up his treasures,
And produced the Living Bread;
And Water from the fountain,
Of Christ the Church's head;
And precious leaves of healing,
From life's eternal tree,
And the ancient Balm of Gilead,
And flowers from Galilee.

THREESCORE YEARS AND TEN.

A hazy, snow-clad mountain peak, far off!
In early boyish days I've seen you stand.
And, as I gazed through intervening years,
I often marvelled how the old must feel,

Who stand as hoary as the peaks themselves,
On the lone heights of that high altitude!
But now I know! for here I stand to-day,
With my threescore and ten years fully told.

Thankful, I stand to-day! and backward look,
To see the winding, toilsome, upward road,
On which, through happy years, I've struggled here:
By humble cottages, and lonely farms,
And brooks that babble on in solitude;
By soldiers' tents; through crowded city streets;
By shores where summer waters ripple in,
And scenes as fair as mortal eyes can see!

Filled to its very brim is my poor heart,
With glowing gratitude to God and man!
I see the dark abyss, whose yawning depths,
Gaped for me like the jaws of some wild beast!
The perilous precipice, upon whose verge
My undecided feet were prone to stand!
The hand of God in that strange providence,
That snatched me as a brand from out the fire;
And angel visits in Gethsemane!

O grace divine! Eternity itself,
E'en when my mind has got immortal strength,
Shall not give scope for all my grateful praise!
And you, my fellow travellers beloved,—
Some sleep in dust, and some are far away—
Whose courage oft has been my stimulus
And inspiration in my hours of need—
To you I owe a debt I cannot pay!

And now I turn, and there above me high
Are other peaks upon whose summits lone
Some few shall stand, who greater strength receive.
Shall I be there? Ah, who but God can tell!
What matters it? for higher still I see,
Not mountain peaks alone, but hills and vales—
The better country which the ancients sought—
Where stands our Father's House! And even now
Sweet odours from the fairest flowers that bloom,
Within that radiant Paradise of God,
Make glad the heart of him, who often dreams,
Of that great life, the future has in store!

COME UNTO ME.

"And him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out.—
JOHN vi., 37.

Jesus, I hear Thy voice so sweet and tender,
Say, Come as you are to Me;
And all I am and have I seek to render, ,
O Lord of love to Thee.

So vile am I, so utterly undone,
 Unfit to see Thy face;
 And this poor heart Thou perfectly hast won
 By Thy sweet words of grace.

From hands unclean Thou feelest no revulsion,
 But takest them in Thine;
 With gentle pressure and with sweet compulsion,
 I feel yours laid in mine.

And not to sinful me alone Thou turnest,
 But to each contrite soul;
 His prayer of penitence Thou never spurnest,
 Who wants to be made whole.

O Lord! my Lord, what present can I bring Thee
 For all Thy grace to me?
 Oh! let that grace transform my very being,
 Till I'm not I, but Thee!



REV. RODERICK LAWSON.

The Rev. Roderick Lawson began his clerical career as assistant to the Rev. John M'Leod, of Govan, who then was minister of the parish of Newton-upon-Ayr. Mr Lawson was subsequently ordained to the ministry of the parish of Maybole, in which charge he laboured strenuously till near the close of his life. He is better known as a writer of local history than a poet, and it cannot be said that any of his musings add to the literary laurels he has won by his prose-writings.

The following piece will suffice to give readers some idea of his poetic powers:—

THE WELLTREES SPOUT.

The Welltrees Spout comes bursting out
 From its bed of silent stone,
 Like the Smitten Rock of old that flowed
 In Horeb's desert lone.
 And its waters cool from the bubbling pool
 Leap up to the light of day,
 As glad to look on the face of man
 And cheer him on his way.

Full many a scene of the Past, I ween,
 Is linked with that quiet spot,
 And many a face once knew that place
 Whom earth now knoweth not.
 Yet still the big Ash lifts its head,
 And sings to the passing breeze,
 While the children gay shout at their play
 Round the steps of the old Welltrees.

O, Welltrees Spout, that gushes out
 With waters clear and cold,
 I give thee the praise of useful days,
 And the thanks of young and old.
 I wish that my life were with good as rife,
 And my heart from stains as free,
 As the waters that rise to my gladdened eyes
 From the root of thy old Ash tree.

* *

JOHN M'LURE.

The parish of Colmonell, in the extreme south-west of Ayrshire, claims at least one poet as its own. After leaving school at Barrhill, John M'Lure added to his learning by attending one session at the University of Glasgow. From Wigtonshire, where for a time he was engaged in sheep farming, he eventually removed to Bathgate, where he established a business as a seed and grain merchant. Mr M'Lure's literary work includes prose sketches as well as poetry.

* *

JAMES ROGER.

James Roger has acquired local fame as an enthusiastic geologist and botanist as well as a poet of no inconsiderable merit. He was born in Kirkmichael, but left his native shades ere yet he had emerged from his teens, and while in the very prime of manhood entered the service of the North British Railway Company, eventually obtaining the appointment of stationmaster at Roslin. His verses are melodious and pleasing and are "tinged with all the orthodox virtues."

EVENING CHIMES.

'Tis by struggling men grow noble,
 Trampling on unworthy things;
 Gathering up the misspent moments—
 Precious pearls on golden strings.

Looking upwards, ever heavenwards,
 Like the spire of God's own house,
 Casting worldly cares behind us,
 Praising God with cheerful voice.

Then droop not in the weary conflict,
 God will help you on your way;
 And in hours of dark temptation
 Hopefully and humbly pray.

Though adversities surround thee,
 Still press onward, do not fear;
 And though vanquished in thy sorrow,
 God will wipe the falling tear.

Look with loving gaze to Jesus,
 Kingly Author of our faith,
 Present Aid in every trouble,
 Comforter in hour of death.

Oh! look upwards, ever heavenwards,
 Listen to His gracious word;
 They are blest, forever blest,
 Who wait and rest upon the Lord.



MRS DR AULD.

On our list of Carrick minstrels Mrs Dr Auld, of Kilwinning, comes last but one in point of time, but by no means in point of merit. Agnes Wellwood, for such is her maiden name, was born at Kirkmichael, and educated at Ardrossan and Edinburgh. At the early age of twenty years she was appointed a Government certificated teacher, and while following this calling in Dumfriesshire and in Ayrshire she studied music both vocal and instrumental. To these congenial pursuits she eventually added poesy, several of her poems appearing from time to time in the Glasgow and Ayrshire weeklies. She subsequently issued a collection of her poems under the title of "Souvenir of Song," copies of which were accepted and acknowledged by her late Majesty Queen Victoria and by Queen Alexandra. As becomes one who is a musician as well as a poetess, the verses in this volume are tuneful and melodious throughout, and flow with graceful ease from the pen of our gifted writer, whose song-gush is as pure and sparkling as the fountains of Helicon. Although our authoress sings of many Scottish themes and scenes, her muse, says a reviewer, "is neither provincial nor local. Heroism, virtue, truth, and beauty are not the monopoly of any particular clime or country, and therefore our authoress, being wise as well as warm of heart, selects her subjects from a wider area." In 1872 Agnes Wellwood was married to Dr Auld, of Kilwinning, and since then has resided in the ancient abbey town.

SCOTLAND.

Scotland! thou'rt dear to me
 Where'er I wander;
 No land so fair I see
 Howe'er I ponder.

I see thy peaks so hoar—
 Thy rugged mountains;
 Thoughts linger as of yore,
 By thy clear fountains.

Thy crags and wild ravines—
 Haunts for the eagle;
 Rocks beetling in the sun—
 Homes for the sea-gull.

Thy moss and moor so wild,,
 Covenanters found them;
 Thy hills in summer's smile,
 Heather hath crown'd them.

Oh! when I think of thee
 In Lowland beauty,
 Pastures where shepherds free
 Sing while on duty.

Clyde, Forth, and Tweed so dear,
 Mid hills meandering;
 Meads sweet and flow'rets fair,
 'Mong them I'm wandering.

Over quiet upland lea
 Skylark sings highly;
 Down by the foaming sea
 Curlew wades shyly.

Thy lonely tarns where coot
 Finds her quiet dwelling;
 In thy sweet woodland glade
 Blackbird's voice mellowing.

Up through the Highland glen
 Deer bound fantastic;
 Far from the haunts of men
 Those rush majestic.

Scotia's sons, bold and brave,
 Stern in defending;
 True hearts these heroes have
 To foes unbending.

SAINT WINNING.

His bark had braved the western gale,
 He blithely trims his vessel's sail,
 And as the evening shadows fall
 He moors his tiny coracle.
 From western isles the abbot sail'd,
 Hope rose when Ayrshire shores he hail'd,
 Tho' frame was chill and limbs were cold,
 This pioneer for Christ was bold.

"By Garnock's dunes and hills of bent,
In Segton shall my life be spent;
To found a church my noblest aim,
To tell of Christ and spread His name."

* * * * *

Saint Winning cast his wrap aside;
He drew his skiff from out the tide,
With eager eyes he scanned the plain,
And thought of home not seen again.
He looked for nook, for cell retreat,
He looked around for kindly seat;
And, baffled by the dearth of food
Round Garnock's dunes and solitude,
He was not slow to blame the sprite
Who had defrauded him of right;
And, cursing Garnock's finny creatures,
An angry frown stole o'er his features.

* * * * *

Truth dawn'd, and seasons came and went,
While all the while his life was spent
In teaching churls the homely arts,
While sowing God's Word in their hearts.
The chief he taught to love his clan,
And prove himself a kinder man;
He won the love of yeoman bold,
And read that "story never old;"
He won the children, tender, fair,
And told them of a "Shepherd's care;"
The maiden's heart he e'en would move
By Martha's zeal and Mary's love.

* * * * *

A thousand years' relentless sweep—
Time mars the page we fain would keep.
Nigh thirteen centuries have fled
Since he was numbered with the dead.

HARMONY.

With the weft and the woof, the fair web of our life God is weaving,
Altho' to our vision the threads may seem tangled and torn;
And the glorified saints are adoring (which mortals are grieving)
The bliss that has beamed o'er their path from the murk to the morn.

All through our island—its cities, its hills, and its valley,
The Press, or the Pulpit, or Platform the fortress of Error assails;
All through the toils, and the wants, and the woes of the weak in
our alleys,
Strong with Might of the Right, the triumph of Goodness prevails.

Through seeming wrangle and gangle, the singers are sounding their
pæons,
The triumph of Right over Might, great deeds unselfishly done,
Are wafted thro' cycles of Time on—onward thro' æons and æons,
For goodness is beauty—the song of the stars and the seraphs is
one.

WILLIAM ARCHIBALD BRYSSON MACKINLAY.

William Archibald Brysson Mackinlay was born in Coylton Manse, and in early manhood studied law at the University of Edinburgh. Briefs, however, proved too dry and tedious matter for Mr Mackinlay, and he cut brief his legal career and drifted into the balmier atmosphere of a literary profession, contributing songs and ballads to many well-known newspapers and magazines.

His verse, if it does not exhibit much depth of thought, is smooth, musical, and elegant, giving evidence of a cultured mind.

MIGNONETTE.

O! fair are the flowers in the forest that flourish,
And rare are the gems in the garden that blow;
But fairer and rarer the flow'r that I cherish,
And sweeter and dearer the charms she doth show;
For the graces and loves are in harmony met,
In Mignon, mine own, oh, my sweet Mignonette.

Fresh and fair is the rose-bud when bathed in the dew,
And pure is the lily that nods to the stream;
But the cheek of my Mignon outrivals the hue
Of the rose, as her breast doth the lily, I ween;
For never a flow'ret did Nature beget
To equal my Mignon, my dear Mignonette.

When wit sparkles bright from the eye of a fair,
To enliven the flash of its meteor rays,
'Tis charming indeed, but it cannot compare
With the light in the eye of my Mignon that plays;
For the sweet cherub Love holds an amorous fête
In the eyes of my Mignon, mine own Mignonette!

And shall I no more in thy sunny smile joy?
Or drink the delight of thy love-lighted glance?
Shall thy sweet murmured pleading me never decoy
Or thy soft crimson blushes forbear to entrance?
For the bright cynosure of life's firmament's set
Ere I leave thee, my Mignon, my sweet Mignonette!

May the fierce storm of sorrow thy petals ne'er blight,
Nor the keen icy wind of misfortune impair!
But the warm sun of love thee forever delight,
And shine on thy blossom unceasing and fair
With a smile for the past, and a sigh of regret—
Adieu! lovely Mignon, mine own Mignonette!

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The New York Public Library is a great institution, and it is one of the most important in the world. It is a place where people can find books, and it is a place where people can learn. It is a place where people can find the books that they need, and it is a place where people can find the books that they want. It is a place where people can find the books that they need, and it is a place where people can find the books that they want.

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LATER AND MODERN POETS OF
AYRSHIRE.

BOOK II.—CONCLUDED.

PART III.—THE POETS OF CUNINGHAME FROM THE
REV. GEORGE CAMPBELL TILL THE PRESENT
DAY.

PLATE AND METRIC POETRY
A SYSTEM

BOOK II.—CONCLUSION

PLATE III.—THE POETRY OF CONSONANCE WITH THE
NEW GROUPS OF SOUNDS AND THE POETRY
OF THE

REV. GEORGE CAMPBELL.

The roll call of the bards of Cuninghame is a lengthy one, and includes several poets whose genius is of a high order and whose verses are an invaluable literary asset to this division of Ayrshire. The majority of the past poets of Cuninghame were born in humble circumstances, and had in a large measure their own plodding perseverance and industry to thank for the attainments acquired by them while at the same time struggling manfully to win their daily bread and other necessities of life. Of this number was George Campbell, a contemporary of Robert Burns, and an aspirant after poetical renown. Mr Campbell was born in Kilmarnock, and was there initiated at a green age into the mysteries of St Crispin's craft, but by dint of hard reading and self-improvement he qualified himself for the duties of a schoolmaster, and eventually for those of the ministry, and at length found a sphere of pastoral labours in Stockbridge, near Dunbar. A volume of his poems was published by John Wilson, Kilmarnock, the printer of Burns's first edition, and was finished in the same style of binding. The marked difference of the volumes lies not outside of but between the boards, since the Rev. George Campbell's verse lacks the individuality necessary to sustain it under the trying ordeal of time.

The following lyrical piece will serve as a specimen of the poet's writings:—

ODE ON CHEERFULNESS.

Say, ye sages, where to find
A calm, content, and cheerful mind;
Or with all your wit profound,
How to keep the bliss when found.

Will heaps of gold or silver bright
E'er afford the gay delight?
Or power and wealth together join'd
Dispel the sorrows of the mind?

Has Honour, when attained, the charm
'Gainst discontent the soul to arm?
Or is the man who laurel wears
Still exempt from shedding tears?

Will Science with her many rules,
Or all the learning of the schools,
E'er to the utmost satisfy
The minds that after knowledge pry?

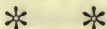
Or can the Muse, with pleasant song,
The much-wished happiness prolong,
Still cause the cheerful numbers flow,
Nor utter one sad strain of woe?

Can noisy mirth or flowing bowls,
The chief solace of jovial souls,
Cause every cloud of sorrow fly,
And not be followed with a sigh?

Is love, though happy, always free
From anxious thoughts of jealousy?
Or does it yield a lasting joy—
A sweetness that can never cloy?

These with united voice reply—
“In us the bliss did never lie.”
We know the flush of transient mirth,
But this you seek grows not on earth.

“From heaven the bliss must be obtained”—
The happy man with guilt unstained
Who treads religion's sacred ways,
To him it comes, with him it stays.



JAMES MONTGOMERY.

James Montgomery, whose style of composition bears some resemblance to that of the English poet Cowper, was born in Irvine, but on his parents removing to Ireland and afterwards to the West Indies on missionary work, he was sent to be educated at Fulneck Seminary, near Leeds. His association with Ayrshire was therefore cut off almost in infancy. After leaving Fulneck Seminary he was put to learn the grocery trade, but did not continue long at the work, which to a mind of his bent was sheer drudgery.

About this time his Muse pruned her wings for flight, and collecting some of his juvenile verses he proceeded to London with the view of submitting them for publication. At first he met with the customary rebuffs, but eventually a publisher named Harrison, in Paternoster Row, perceiving some glimpses of genius in the lad, encouraged him to persevere, and although unwilling to risk the publishing of his poems, he treated him kindly and took him into his employment.

After a time Montgomery returned to Yorkshire, and was fortunate in being appointed assistant manager of a newspaper called the “Sheffield Register,” conducted by a Mr Gales.

While in this situation Montgomery endeared himself to a

circle of warm-hearted friends, by whose assistance he was able, on the retiral of Mr Gales, to establish a weekly newspaper, entitled "The Sheffield Iris."

Montgomery's strongly pronounced Radicalism very soon brought him under the jealous eyes of political opponents, and for printing and selling to a street-hawker a political squib, entitled "The Fall of the Bastille," he called down on his editorial head the vengeance of the ruling powers, who had him committed to York Castle for three months and mulcted in a fine of twenty pounds. Soon after liberation he was condemned to a second imprisonment of six months for inserting in his paper an account of a riot, which, it was alleged, reflected seriously on the character of one of the Sheffield Magistrates. Such in "the good old times" was the precarious calling of a newspaper editor. During his confinement our poet diverted his mind by writing poems and songs, which he published in 1797 under the title of "Prison Amusements." The harsh treatment meted out to Montgomery in the early days of the "Iris" was in strange contrast to the reception given him when, on his retiral in 1825 from the staff of this newspaper, he was entertained by his fellow-townsmen to a public dinner. After vacating the editorial chair he lived in a suburban house known as "The Mount," where he was visited by many eminent persons.

TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF ROBERT BURNS.

What bird in beauty, flight, or song
Can with the bard compare,
Who sang as sweet and soared as strong
As ever child of air?

His plume, his note, his form could Burns,
For whim or pleasure, change;
He was not one, but all by turns,
With transmigration strange:—

The blackbird, oracle of Spring,
When flowed his moral lay;
The swallow wheeling on the wing,
Capriciously at play;

The humming bird, from bloom to bloom,
Inhaling heavenly balm;
The raven in the tempest's gloom;
The halcyon in the calm;

In "auld Kirk Alloway" the owl,
At witching time of night;
By "bonnie Doon" the earliest fowl
That carolled to the light.

He was the wren amidst the grove,
 When in his homely vein;
 At Bannockburn the bird of Jove,
 With thunder in his train;

The woodlark, in his mournful hours;
 The goldfinch, in his mirth;
 The thrush, a spendthrift of his powers,
 Enrapturing heaven and earth.

The swan, in majesty and grace,
 Contemplative and still;
 But roused—no falcon in the chase
 Could, like his satire, kill;

The linnet in simplicity;
 In tenderness the dove;
 But, more than all beside, was he
 The nightingale in love.

Oh! had he never stooped to shame,
 Nor lent a charm to vice,
 How had devotion loved to name
 That bird of Paradise?

Peace to the dead! In Scotia's choir
 Of minstrels, great and small,
 He sprang from his spontaneous fire
 The Phoenix of them all!

HOME.

There is a land of every land the pride,
 Beloved by heaven o'er all the world beside;
 Where brighter suns dispense serener light,
 And milder moons emparadise the night;
 A land of beauty, virtue, valour, truth,
 Time-tutored age, and love-exalted youth;
 The wandering mariner, whose eye explores
 The wealthiest isles, the most enchanting shores,
 Views not a realm so bountiful and fair,
 Nor breathes the spirit of a purer air.
 In every clime the magnet of his soul,
 Touched by remembrance, trembles to that pole;
 For in this land of heaven's peculiar grace,
 The heritage of Nature's noblest race,
 There is a spot of earth, supremely blest,
 A dearer, sweeter spot than all the rest,
 Where man, creation's tyrant, casts aside
 His sword and sceptre, pageantry, and pride,
 While in his softened looks benignly blend
 The sire, the son, the husband, brother, friend;
 There woman reigns; the mother, daughter, wife,
 Strew with fresh flow'rs the narrow way of life;
 In the clear heaven of her delightful eye,
 An angel guard of loves and graces lie;
 Around her knees domestic duties meet,
 And fireside pleasures gambol at her feet.

Where shall that land, that spot of earth be found?
Art thou a man? a patriot?—look around!
O, thou shalt find, howe'er thy footsteps roam,
That land thy country, and that spot thy home!

THE COMMON LOT.

Once in the flight of ages past,
There lived a man—and who was he?
Mortal! howe'er thy lot be cast,
That man resembled thee.

Unknown the region of his birth,
The land in which he died unknown;
His name has perished from the earth;
This truth survives alone:—

That joy and grief, and hope and fear,
Alternate triumphed in his breast;
His bliss and woe—a smile, a tear;
Oblivion hides the rest.

The bounding pulse, the languid limb,
The changing spirit's rise and fall;
We know that these were felt by him,
For these are felt by all.

He suffered—but his pangs are o'er;
Enjoyed—but his delights are fled;
Had friends—his friends are now no more;
And foes—his foes are dead.

He loved—but whom he loved the grave
Hath lost in its unconscious womb;
O, she was fair!—but nought could save
Her beauty from the tomb.

He saw whatever thou hast seen;
Encountered all that troubles thee;
He was—whatever thou hast been;
He is—what thou shalt be.

The rolling seasons, day and night,
Sun, moon, and stars, the earth and main,
Erewhile his portion, life and light
To him exist in vain.

The clouds and sunbeams o'er his eye
That once their shades and glory threw,
Have left in yonder silent sky
No vestige where they flew.

The annals of the human race,
Their ruins since the world began,
Of him afford no other trace
Than this—there lived a man!

JAMES THOMSON.

The name of this *litterateur* occupies a unique place in the literary annals of Kilmarnock, Thomson being editor and publisher of the first weekly periodical emanating from the Kilmarnock Press. It was called the "Ayrshire Miscellany or Kilmarnock Literary Expositor," and came into being in 1817, expiring in 1822. Its successor, the "Kilmarnock Mirror or Literary Gleaner," existed only about six months.

James Thomson's father was proprietor of a tan work in Kilmarnock. When the poet reached manhood he began to take an active interest in military affairs, and for a time held the command of a corps known as the Kilmarnock Sharpshooters. In the equipment of this corps he spent a large sum of money, which greatly reduced his fortune and was the means of breaking up a business partnership which he held with his brother. He then turned his attention to literary work, but on obtaining a commission in the Argyleshire Militia he embarked with his regiment for Ireland, where his health gave way and compelled him to return to his native town.

MUSINGS IN OCTOBER.

October winds blow sharp and strong,
The clouds veer thro' an angry sky,
The muddy torrent rolls along,
And scarce a bird is seen to fly.

Yet on the spray sweet Robin sings,
His cheerful notes give fancy range;
He shakes the rain-drops from his wings
And lilts insensible to change.

O, could I careless hear the blast,
Or placid, see the torrent roll;
Could I but smile when sky's o'ercast,
And lightnings dart from pole to pole!

O'er Nature's wreck I ceaseless mourn—
Her blighted scenes I love to trace;
Too like this bosom, wounded, torn,
This frame robbed of its manly grace.

Betimes the darkest sky will clear;
The leafless tree will bud again;
The with'ring flowers new bloom shall wear,
And plants and shrubs adorn the plain.

But when shall spring return to me?

Ah! never on this earth below!

Hail! land of immortality!

Where storms of time shall cease to blow.

Be these my hopes and these my joys,

Anticipation's visions sweet;

Far from ambition's madd'ning noise,

Till death shall sound the grand retreat.

Then farewell change, and farewell tears,

Ye ne'er shall wound this breast again;

And farewell doubts, and farewell fears,

My spirit treats you with disdain.

The rich man's sneer, the haughty scorn,

The vulgar taunts of low and mean,

In this strange region have I borne,

And long companionless have been.

Not so in yonder bright abode!

Where rich and poor together meet,

And humbly bend before their God,

With hymns and songs divinely sweet.

This task be mine through endless years,

I'll patient bear the storms of time;

And joyful leave this vale of tears

To breathe a mild celestial clime.



JOHN WILSON.

John Wilson was a contemporary and fellow-townsmen of the poet James Thomson, of Kilmarnock. While still a young man he contributed pleasing little pieces of prose and verse to Thomson's "Ayrshire Miscellany." Mr Wilson removed after a time to Ireland, where he pursued the calling of a phrenologist. His verse is marked by fluency, and is not devoid of poetic imagination as shown by the following lines:—

Fragment supposed to be written by a lover on seeing his
expected bride clothed in the robes of death.

In thee celestial beauty bloom'd;

A fragrant evergreen;

Which still thy countenance illumed,

Thy manners graced—thy speech perfumed,

And kept thy soul serene.

Hope whisper'd thou wouldst be my bride,

And fair the future smiled;

But Death did soon that hope deride,

Soon swept thee into Ruin's tide,

And my gay prospects spoil'd.

Yet still that lovely look of thine—
 The last thou ever gave;
 That angel glance—that smile divine—
 Around my ravished heart will twine,
 And bind it to thy grave.

There may I soon be lowly laid,
 To mingle with the clay;
 Though through the chambers of my head,
 Where love has oft his gambols play'd,
 The worm will find its way.

There we from woe will both be free,
 And to oblivion given;
 But stay—sweet saint! that is not thee.
 'Tis but thy former chains I see:
 Thou now art free—in Heaven.

Thou now hast tasted life's pure stream,
 That glides the bowers above;
 Where God's best gifts unnumber'd team,
 Where saints in brightest beauty beam,
 And sing the song of love.



JOHN GALT.

John Galt may be regarded as the pioneer of the so-called "Kailyard School of Scottish Literature." He was born in Irvine, and lived there until the tenth year of his age, when he was sent to Greenock to join his father, who, being a ship-captain, had a residence there. Galt attended Greenock school, and was no precocious youth, his health in early life being rather unstable, but he showed an unmistakable talent for mechanics and music, besides making occasional excursions into the fields of literature. His early poetic flights included a tragedy founded on the fortunes of Mary Queen of Scots, and a poem on the Battle of Largs. Having completed his school education he was engaged first in the Custom-house as a clerk and afterwards in a merchant's office, but taking offence at some of his superiors he left this employment and made his way to London, spending a short period in the southern metropolis, during which he engaged unsuccessfully in a mercantile venture. He afterwards resolved to study for the legal profession, but being attacked by a nervous malady he made little progress in his studies, and after a few years quitted England with the sole purpose of re-establishing his health. Travelling to the Mediterranean, he had the good luck to make the acquaintance of

Lord Byron, who joined the ship at Gibraltar. During his sojourn Galt visited Malta and Constantinople, gathering materials on the way for his book, entitled "Voyages and Travels." Fertile as he was in authorship, John Galt was something more than a born romancer, being a man of great activity of mind and prolific enterprise, evolving scheme after scheme, which, although prosperous for a time, brought only disappointment and bitterness in the end. He conceived a splendid project for the allocation and improvement of land in Upper Canada. His plans were adopted and a strong company in England was formed, the originator being deputed to proceed to Canada and superintend the carrying into effect of his project. The salary attached to this post was a thousand pounds per annum. After being about three years in this service Galt involved himself in disputes with the Colonial Government, and a cabal being formed against him in England he found it expedient to resign his connection with the company. Meanwhile, he had succeeded in founding the township of Guelph, and had given to the territory now known as Galt an Irvine name. Having parted company with his masters he returned to Britain an impoverished adventurer, grievously disappointed and almost broken-hearted, his only reward being the ingratitude of those who ought to have been proud of him as a colonial pioneer of marked insight and ability. For some time after his return he edited the "Courier," a London newspaper, and engaged in other literary work, but notwithstanding his vigorous mental capabilities, adversity seemed to follow him to the end, and ultimately he was forced to leave London and take up his abode in Greenock, where he succumbed to an attack of paralysis on the 11th of April, 1839.

Galt's works number as many as sixty volumes, all in prose except a small selection of poems published a few years before his death and when the spirit was "bowed down by ill-health and harassed by wasting cares." His reputation as an author rests on his powers of quaint and humorous description, as exemplified in his delineation of Scottish life and character, always faithful and true to provincial peculiarities and to national character. His prose writings have almost wholly eclipsed his fame as a poet.

CANADIAN REFLECTIONS.

From a posthumous volume entitled "The Demon of Destiny and Other Poems."

At pensive eve, what time the sun
Peeped through the trees, his journey done;
I loved to walk the greenwood still,
Where gloom seems silence visible,
And note the fading hues of light,
My heart partaking too of night.

When flowers that in the noonbeam shone
With colours, like my hopes, were gone;
Oft in the twilight of the wood
I view'd that awed prophetic mood,
Which sees the future as a dream
And life a shadow'd woodland stream.

Till through the boughs I chanced to see
The heavenly orb's bright revelry.
And felt assured, however late,
That time would be my advocate,
And make my aims, despite my fear,
As stars from darkness come, appear.

NIGHT STORM IN THE TROPICS.

"And as the moon her solemn beauty shed,
From the dark ramparts of the orient hill,
A sulphurous warmth oppress'd the living air,
And in the zenith where in phalanx bright
The starry host move brightest, dismal spread
An omen black, the herald of a storm:
And suddenly as if Jehovah drew
His sword of vengeance, lightning flashed amain;
Then as an earthquake, hungry as the grave,
Gorging the pomp of some great capital,
Rolled the vast thunder, cataracts of dread:
While fiercest hissings rose, as if the trees
Were all exasperated, as of old
Was the pest Hydra in its Lernian bed,
When wounded by the iron of Hercules.
The waters rushed, with headlong passion wild,
From steep and cliff, and bosky precipice,
And deluge, with her hundred voices hoarse,
Gave hideous warning that rebelling wrath
Might yet again in Ocean trample earth.

* * * * *

"Meanwhile, without the storm had ceased: the air
Was all as moonlight—pure, yet visible;
And in the dome and concave of the welkin,
The vapours vanishing, melted away,
Exulting sweet from their choirs around

The holy nightingales an anthem hymned,
 And all was calm, as if Tranquillity
 Came from the starry azure of the sky
 To soothe vex'd Nature to her wont again."

Extract from original poem entitled

IRVINE WATER.

" Well I remember all the golden prime—
 When sleep and joy were night and day in time—
 That to be drowsy on my mother's knee
 Was almost sweeter than blest liberty.
 Oh! how my heart enjoyed the lov'd caress,
 The patted cheek, the fond maternalness;
 And that soft blessing, Heaven could not but hear,
 While on my neck fell the delightful tear.
 Oft in the trances of my wond'ring youth,
 When life was light, and hope believ'd as truth,
 On the green hill I lov'd to muse alone,
 When gold-eyed daisies bright around me shone,
 And think in innocence of boyhood, then,
 How all was lovely that was made for men.
 That young conceit, in Fortune's darkest hour,
 Has been the candle of my midnight bower;
 And still, while ills on wrongs increasing come,
 It is the torch that lights me on to home.
 Well do I mind the thrilling gush of bliss
 With which the energy of cheerfulness
 First came upon me in those simple days,
 When discontent could but the boy amaze.
 A Sabbath stillness sweetened all the air,
 The fragrant sunshine of the summer glare,
 Visible blessedness, felicity,
 Was, as if Goodness could partake of glee,
 Boundless afar the shining ocean spread,
 The azure infinite was overhead,
 And in her robes Maternal Nature smiled,
 As if the world and heaven were reconciled.
 In that calm noon, as on the grass I lay,
 Methought I heard some gentle spirit say:—
 ' Man caged in finitude can never know
 The happiness of full perfection's glow;
 But he may taste, and ever more and more,
 Something of what the future has in store!
 Ever since then by Compensating Heaven
 For all of suffering, recompense was given.
 But tho' the thought, as boyhood's thought, was crude,
 I glow'd with it, as if the sense of good
 Was first experienced then. Oh, many a time,
 Amidst dismay has it appeared sublime,
 Serene and clear, beyond the hurrying strife
 Of storm and clouds that awed the scene of life;
 Oft it has seemed, o'er streamers glaring red,
 The morning's harbinger, forbidding dread.
 E'en yet, thank Heaven, tho' all be dark and drear
 Around my path, and Reason beck on Fear,
 The cheerful dream that visited my youth

Smiles beautiful, oh beautiful as Truth.
 But why is it that in this solemn hour
 I can but think of boyhood's nest and bower:—
 Around but scenes of love I see. Alas!
 All that I see is but in Memory's glass.
 Oh! never more must I again behold
 Such sunny days as were so bright of old,
 When she that's dust embraced her wayward own,
 And all the claims upon me were unknown.
 My native burgh—its window-eyes so bright—
 Basks in the noon and purrs as with delight:
 Sweet is the thought, as in that hour of ease,
 When all of life was but to play or please.
 Mysterious Nature! Why should he complain,
 Who plays a child in Memory's hall again,
 Who sees around him ever bright and fair,
 The hopes of life, though but a picture's there;
 And with the past, when griefs and cares annoy,
 May be again a happy-hearted boy."



ANDREW AITKEN.

Andrew Aitken was in his day a noted farmer in Overton, near Beith, where he laboured industriously until threescore years had gone over his head, maintaining all through life the good friendship of a large number of respectable and influential neighbours. In 1845 his friends and acquaintances presented him with a purse of sovereigns and an antique arm-chair in recognition of his private worth and literary talents. As a poet he was well-known locally, many of his effusions appearing in periodicals of his time, and still more of them being familiarly known and recited at the firesides of the Ayrshire peasantry. Strangely enough, Mr Aitken never attended school, his mother teaching him the use of the alphabet, after which he soon learned to read parts of the Bible, and by transcribing songs and scraps of poetry he learned to spell, punctuate, and compose. He was much indebted in early life to Miss Patrick of Trearne, who supplied him with books out of the family library.

THE AULD FLECKIT COW.

Frae the well we get water, frae the heugh we get fuel,
 Frae the rigs we get barley, frae the sheep we get woo';
 Frae the bees we get hinny, an' eggs frae the chuckie,
 An' plenty o' milk frae our auld fleckit cow.
 An' O my dear lassie, be guid to auld fleckie,
 Wi' the best o' hay-fodder, an' rips frae the mow;
 Boil'd meat in a bakie, warm, mix'd up in bean meal,
 For it's a' weel bestowed on the auld fleckit cow.

She's wee and she's auld, and she's lame an' she's hammilt,
 An' mair than sax years she's been farrow, I trow;
 But she fills aye the luggie, baith e'enin' an' morning,
 An' rich creamy milk gi'es our auld farrow cow.
 An' O my dear lassie, be guid to auld fleckie,
 An' dinna gi'e a' the guid meat to the sow;
 For the hens will be craikin', the ducks will be quakin',
 To wile the tid-bites frae the auld farrow cow.

She ne'er breaks the fences, to spoil corn an' 'tatoes,
 Contented though lanely, the grass she does pu';
 She ne'er wastes her teeth, munching stanes or aul' leather,
 But cannie, lying down, chews her cud when she's fu'.
 Then, O my dear lassie, be guid to auld fleckie,
 An' min' that she just gies her milk by the mow;
 An' we'll still get braw kebbucks, an nice yellow butter,
 An' cream to our tea, frae the auld fleckit cow.

In the byre she's aye cannie, nor e'er needs a burroch,
 But gies her milk freely whene'er it is due;
 Wi' routing and rairing she ne'er deaves the neighbours—
 They ne'er hear the croon o' the auld fleckit cow.
 An' O, feed her weel wi' the sappy red clover,
 Green kail, yellow turnips, and cabbage enow;
 For she's whyles in the house, an' her gang's no that birthy,
 The grass is owre sour for our milky auld cow.

When clegs, flies, and midges, or hornets, molest her,
 Or cauld stormy weather brings danger in view;
 In her ain warm wee housie, frae harm's way protect her—
 I'm feared something happen our auld fleckit cow.
 An' my guid tentie lassie will wed some guid farmer,
 Wi' bonnie green parks baith to grass an' to plough;
 White sheep, an' milk kye, o' the best breeds o' Ayrshire,
 For muckle she's made out the auld fleckit cow.

We'll no pairt wi' auld fleckie for some years to come yet,
 An' our lang lifetime that deed sair wad we rue;
 For she hasna a calf to haud fu' the brinnin',
 An' fill up the place o' the auld fleckit cow.
 Sae O, my guid lassie, remember auld fleckie,
 An' feed her an' milk her as lang's she will do;
 We hae aye been weel ser'd, an' she's noo awn us naething,
 But we'll ne'er get a match to the auld fleckit cow.

O leeze me on milk, it's the food o' the baby,
 O' the strong, bloomin' youth, an' the auld bodie too;
 Our gentles may sip at their tea and their toddy,
 But gie me the milk o' the auld fleckit cow.
 An', O my kind lassie, the springtime is coming,
 An' the grass it will grow, an' we'll hear the cuckoo;
 The laverocks will sing, an' we'll a' tread the gowan,
 An' drink the rich milk o' our ain hammilt cow.

The dames o' the south boast their flocks o' milk camels,
 Their bread-bearing trees, an' their huts o' bamboo;
 An' the wives o' the north hae their seals an' their reindeer,
 But we hae oatmeal an' the auld fleckit cow.

An' O my dear Peggy, we're thankfu' for mulloch,
 Sad care an' distrust ne'er shall darken our brow;
 An' I wish a' the housekeepin' folk in the nation
 Could sup the pure milk o' their ain' fleckit cow.



JAMES STIRRAT.

The postmaster in a small village is respected almost as much as the minister and doctor. Coming into frequent touch with all classes, there is a flow and return of sympathies and courtesies on his part and on that of the public which induces a friendship closer than that of a mere casual acquaintanceship. When the man of postage chances to add to his other good qualifications that of a poet, the sympathetic tie is then at its strongest. Dalry was fortunate in having such a postmaster in the person of James Stirrat, who was, moreover, a son of the village. At a very early age his love for poetry was stimulated by the writings of Robert Burns, whose praises he sounded so admirably in later years. The following song is that by which his name will in all probability be longest remembered. It was written for the Burns Anniversary of 1829:

There's nae bard to charm us now,
 Nae bard ava,
 Can sing a sang to Nature true,
 Since Coila's bard's awa'.
 The simple harp o' earlier days
 In silence slumbers now;
 And modern art, wi' tuneless lays,
 Presumes the Nine to woo.
 But nae bard in a' our Isle,
 Nae bard ava,
 Frae pawky Coila wons a smile
 Since Robin gaed awa'.

His hamely style let Fashion spurn:
 She wants baith taste and skill;
 And wiser should she ever turn,
 She'll sing his sangs hersel'.
 For nae sang sic pathos speaks,
 Nae sang ava;
 And Fashion's foreign rants and squeaks
 Should a' be drumm'd awa'.

Her far-fetch'd figures aye maun fail
 To touch the feeling heart;
 Simplicity's direct appeal
 Excels sic learned art.

And nae modern minstrel's lay,
Nae lay ava,
Sae powerfully the heart can sway
As Robin's that's awa'.

For o'er his numbers Coila's muse
A magic influence breathed,
And round her darling poet's brow
A peerless crown had wreath'd.
And nae wreath that e'er was seen,
Nae wreath ava,
Will bloom sae lang's the holly green
O' Robin's that's awa'.

Let Erin's minstrel, Tommy Moore,
His lyrics sweetly sing;
'Twould lend his harp a higher power
Would Coila add a string.
For nae harp has yet been kent,
Nae harp ava,
To match the harp that Coila lent
To Robin that's awa'.

And though our shepherd, Jamie Hogg,
His pipe fu' sweetly plays,
It ne'er will charm auld Scotland's lug
Like Ploughman Robin's lays.
For nae pipe will Jamie tune,
Nae pipe ava,
Like that which breath'd by "bonnie Doon"
Ere Robin gaed awa'.

Even Scotland's pride, Sir Walter Scott,
Who boldly strikes the lyre,
Maun yield to Robin's sweet love-note
His native wit and fire.
For nae bard hath ever sung,
Nae bard ava,
In hamely or in foreign tongue,
Like Robin that's awa'.

Frae feeling heart Tom Campbell's lays
In classic beauty flow,
But Robin's artless sang displays
The soul's impassion'd glow.
For nae bard by classic lore,
Nae bard ava,
Has thrilled the bosom's inmost core
Like Robin that's awa'.

A powerfu' harp did Byron sweep,
But not wi' happy glee;
And though his tones were strong and deep,
He ne'er could change the key.
For nae bard beneath the lift,
Nae bard ava,
Wi' master-skill the keys could shift
Like Robin that's awa'.

He needs nae monumental stanes
 To keep alive his fame;
 Auld Granny Scotland and her weans
 Will ever sing his name.
 For nae name does Fame record,
 Nae name ava,
 By Caledonia mair adored
 Than Robin's that's awa'.



JOHN KENNEDY.

That the knights of the shuttle were in the days of handloom weaving a tuneful community can be judged by the many poets who graced their ranks. John Kennedy, who was a native of Kilmarnock, was apprenticed to the weaving trade, at which he worked till about eighteen years of age, when, yearning for a wider experience of the world, he enlisted in the Royal Ayrshire Militia, and served a term of about eight years. On obtaining his discharge he returned to Kilmarnock, and after spending a short time at the handloom, stepped into the pedagogic shoes of his fellow-poet, John Burt, who kept a flourishing school in the town, but who removed to Paisley shortly after Kennedy's return to Kilmarnock.

Kennedy about this time entered heart and soul into the political problems of the day, and threw in his lot with the advanced reformers, delivering a lecture at a public meeting on the subject of military flogging. From that day he was strictly watched by the Government authorities as a disaffected person, and some three or four years later, instructions were given to search his house for papers of a seditious character. The search took place, but no incriminating evidence was found; nevertheless the dominie was put under arrest and conveyed to Ayr to undergo examination. He was shortly liberated on bail, but some few weeks later was again arrested, and in the company of several other advocates of reform conveyed to Ayr, but nothing of a treasonable nature was found against him.

In 1820 he entered a new sphere of labour at Chapel Green, near Kilsyth, where he spent the last thirteen years of his life as in a quiet haven.

Kennedy stands well in the front rank of Ayrshire authors, not only as a poet, but as a prose writer, his humorous story entitled "Geordie Chalmers" being of itself sufficient to win the author merited fame.

VERSES TO MISS E. S—N.

The morn of life's a cloudless day;
A fairy-dance, a meteor's beam;
A day when hope and fancy play
Like vision in a lover's dream!

A day of gems and flow'rets fair;
Of music, joy, and loveliness;
Of castle-building in the air,
And revelling in the bowers of bliss!

But as through life we onward glide,
Cold, blighting winds begin to rise;
Their radiant tints the roses hide,
And here and there a floweret dies!

Then hope and airy-bounding joy
Begin to flutter on the wing—
The pearly tear to dim the eye—
The sorrow after care to spring!

And while we mourn o'er what has been,
And feel the bitter pangs of strife;
Death, like a prowler, comes unseen,
And snaps the tender thread of life!

Then, oh! where is the rosy smile;
The eye that beamed with friendship dear;
The voice that smoothed the brow of toil;
The lily hand that wiped the tear;

The heart that felt for other's woe;
The breast that burned in virtue's cause;
The look that laid detraction low—
Oh! where is all that lovely was?

All vanished like a thought; or dream;
Or hawthorn-flush; or winged pelf;
Or fleeting fame; or summer stream;
Or rather—ah! like Beauty's self!

But 'yond the grave there is a land,
And in that land there is a light
That beams with an effulgence grand,
And never knows the shade of night!

And there shall be the rosy smile;
The eye that beamed with friendship dear;
The voice that smoothed the brow of toil;
The lily hand that wiped the tear;

The heart that felt for other's woe;
The breast that burned in virtue's cause;
The look that laid detraction low—
There—all that ever lovely was!

HUGH CRAIG.

Hugh Craig was the son of a farmer in the parish of Dunlop, but his tastes lay in the direction of a town life, and after serving an apprenticeship to the drapery trade in Kilmarnock he removed to London, where he succeeded in finding employment with one of the first drapery firms in the city. Mr Craig eventually returned to Kilmarnock and opened a drapery establishment of his own, which he carried on with success till near the sunset of life.

He wrote prose sketches as well as verse, but both are lacking in delicacy of literary perception. Perhaps he was too able a man of business to be a success in literature.



REV. GEORGE JAMES LAURIE, D.D.

If the mark of a true lyrical poet is the favour in which his verses are held by the musical fraternity, then Dr George Laurie by virtue of his one song, "Lang, Lang Syne," is entitled to the honour of being classed a true lyrical poet. George James Laurie belongs to a historical family of Ayrshire ministers, who for three generations occupied the pulpit of the Church of Scotland. In the old Manse of Loudoun, Newmilns, till within a few years ago, might have been seen *in situ* a small window sash on which Robert Burns, the poet, scratched the words, "Lovely Mrs Laurie, she is all charms." The minister of Loudoun who so graciously entertained Burns when on the eve of emigrating to Jamaica was the grandfather of George James Laurie, author of "Lang, Lang Syne." Dr Laurie ministered for the long period of thirty-four years to the parishioners of Monkton, where he was familiarly known as "the dear old doctor," and by his open-heartedness and genial disposition, especially towards the young, secured for himself a warm corner of their hearts.

The doctor has been described as a "fine, big man, with a healthy red face, long curly white hair hanging down his back, and a clear, nervous blue eye."

On demitting his charge at Monkton he removed to Kent, there to spend the brief remainder of his days in quietude.

A mural brass of handsome design was erected by his relatives some years ago in the Parish Church of Monkton and Prestwick.

LANG, LANG SYNE.

Ha'e ye mind o' lang, lang syne,
When the summer days were fine,
An' the sun shone brighter far
Than he's ever dune since syne;
Do ye mind the Hag Brig turn,
Whaur we guddled in the burn,*
And were late for the schule in the mornin'?

Do you mind the sunny braes,
Whar we gathered hips and slaes,
And fell amang the bramble busses,
Tearin' a' oor claes;
And for fear they wad be seen
We gaed slippin' hame at e'en,
But were lickit for oor pains in the mornin'?

Do ye mind the miller's dam,
When the frosty winter cam',
Hoo we slade along the curlers' rinks,
And made their game a sham;
When they chased us through the snaw,
We took leg-bail ane and a',
But we did it o'er again in the mornin'?

What famous fun was there,
Wi' our game at houn' and hare,
When we played the truant frae the schule,
Because it was the fair;
And we ran frae Patie's Mill
To the woods at Windy Hill,
But were fear'd for the tawse in the mornin'.

Where are those bright hearts noo,
That were then sae leal and true?
Oh! some ha'e left life's troubled scene;
Some still are struggling through;
And some ha'e risen high
In life's changeful destiny,
For they rose wi' the lark in the mornin'.

Now life's sweet Spring is past,
And our Autumn's come at last;
Oor Summer day has passed away;
Life's Winter's comin' fast;
But though lang its night may seem,
We shall sleep without a dream,
Till we wauken on yon bright Sabbath mornin'.

* The Hag Burn falls into the River Irvine about half a mile west of the Manse of Loudoun, the early home of Dr Laurie.

THE HOME OF MEMORY.

I have found a home in many a land,
 O'er many a distant sea,
 But Love has touched with his magic wand
 The home of infancy.
 There first I heard the voice of prayer,
 Bent at my mother's knee,
 And the hallowing pow'r of my father's care
 Were life and strength to me.

O, there the morn of youth first dawned
 O'er childhood's setting star,
 And the gushing joys of youthful hearts
 No earthly cares could mar.
 That hallowed spot was ne'er forgot,
 Nor the love that blessed me there,
 Nor the trembling notes of my father's voice
 As he sang at evening prayer.

I was left alone of that happy band,
 Hushed is the mirth and glee
 Of the loving hearts who, hand in hand,
 Sang home's sweet minstrelsy.
 Some sleep beside their father's grave,
 Some lie beneath the sea,
 And one fair boy rests with the brave
 On the field of victory.

Come back! ye spirits of the blest,
 And whisper hope to me!
 Oh! take me where the weary rest,
 From life's dark sorrows free.
 Come teach my lonely heart to bear
 The weary weird I dree,
 Till I join the gathered wanderers there
 From the home of memory.

As a nursery-song writer Dr Laurie comes well up with the authors of "Wee Willie Winkie," "Cuddle Doon," and other celebrated writers who made childhood the theme of their wonderfully fascinating lays. A good specimen of the doctor's lighter vein is that entitled

A SANG TO THE BAIRN.

Hey! hisky doggie!
 Hey! cheety puss!
 Come awa' to Harry's room
 And catch a wee mouse.
 Look below the bed first,
 And syne upon the shelf—
 See! there's the wee beasty,
 Glow'rin' like an elf.

Hey! ducky daidles!
 Hey! chucky hen!
 Fye, dicht¹ your dirty feet,
 And come awa' ben.
 Hae, pick the laddie's parritch,²
 For he winna sup a drap;
 He's rivin' at the nurse's mutch³
 An' rowin' aff her lap.

Look at Trim, the tarry dog,
 Sittin' on the knowe,
 He'll rise and wag his towsy tail
 Afore he says—"Bow-wow."
 He's waitin' for the collie there,
 And when the sun gangs doon,
 He'll row for fun amang the snaw,
 And syne yaff at the moon.

Come gather up the moolins,⁴
 And soop awa' the snaw,
 Then lay them on the window-sill,
 The doos 'll pick them a'.
 Puir cow'rin' things wi' hingin'⁵ wings,
 They're drookit⁶ to the skin;
 Come, cuddle in my bosy noo,
 For fear John Frost comes in.

1 Wipe. 2 Porridge. 3 Cap. 4 Crumbs. 5 Drooping. 6 Drenched.



ARCHIBALD M'KAY.

The historian is a person who deals with facts, the poet a person who deals with fancies, and we seldom find a first-rate poet who is a first-rate historian, but instances occur in which the twofold function is inherited by a single individual. Archibald M'Kay was gifted with the talents of a poet and historian, and turned both to good account. His father was a native of Sutherlandshire, his mother being a native of Kilmarnock, the town of his own nativity. He obtained but a scanty education at the day-schools, but after arriving at manhood, attended an evening grammar class, and by this means increased his knowledge, acquiring at the same time a decided taste for literary pursuits, which was shown in various poetical efforts, which gained for him some local fame. His poetical gift was distinctly lyrical, and some of his songs have retained their popularity till the present day. Perhaps, however, his literary fame will be longest sustained by his "History of Kilmarnock," which has passed through several editions, the latest being that edited by his nephew, Dr William Findlay, the well-known

litterateur, who writes under the *nom de plume* of George Umber. Mr M'Kay was a bookbinder to trade, and kept a small stationery shop, which was a rendezvous for the local literary lights of the period.

BE KIND TO AULD GRANNIE.

Be kind to auld grannie, for noo she is frail,
As a time-shattered tree bending low in the gale;
When ye were wee bairnies, tot totting about,
She watched ye when in and she watched ye when out;
And aye when ye chanced in your daffin' and fun
To dunt your wee heads on the cauld staney grun',
She lifted ye up, and she kissed ye fu' fain,
Till a' your bit cares were forgotten again.

Then be kind to auld grannie, for noo she is frail,
As a time-shattered tree bending low in the gale.

When first in your breasts rose the feeling divine,
That's waked by the tales and the sangs o' lang syne,
Wi' auld warl' cracks she would pleasure inspire,
In the lang winter nichts as she sat by the fire;
Or melt the young hearts wi' some sweet Scottish lay,
Like the "Flowers o' the Forest" or "Auld Robin Gray;"
Though eerie the wind blew around the bit cot,
Grim winter and a' its wild blasts were forgot.

Then be kind to auld grannie, for noo she is frail,
As a time-shattered tree bending low in the gale.

And mind though the blythe day o' youth noo is yours,
Time will wither its joys, as wild winter the flow'rs;
And your step that's noo licht as the bound of the roe
Wi' cheerless auld age may be feeble and slow;
And the frien's o' your youth to the grave may be gane,
And ye on its brink may be totterin' alane;
Oh, think how consoling some frien' would be then,
When the gloamin' o' life comes like mist owre the glen.

Then be kind to auld grannie, for noo she is frail,
As a time-shattered tree bending low in the gale.

LUATH'S ELEGY.

On the author burying his little favourite dog, Luath, June 3,
1867.

My wee bit dog, it mak's one wae
To lay thee in the silent clay;
For ne'er again thy prank and play
Will cheer my bield,
Or gladden me when forth I stray
By wood or field.

Thy heart, as thy blithe features tauld,
 Though just a kennin' rather bauld,
 Was ne'er, I trow, unkind or cauld,
 But aye displayed
 A generous love for young and auld,
 "Whare e'er thou gaed."

When trouble cam' to mine or me,
 And loss of frien's I had to dree,
 Thou look'd wi' sympathetic e'e,
 And seemed to say—
 "O, maister dear, I'm grieved to see
 Thy heart sae wae."

"But frae thy cheek, oh, chase the tear;
 Thou still hast me thy hame to cheer;
 And I, when nights are lang and drear,
 Will sit beside thee,
 And ever be thy frien' sincere
 Whate'er betide thee."

"And aften yet in simmer days,
 When Nature wears her brawest claes,
 Wi' thee I'll speil the Craigie braes,
 Nor ever weary,
 But frisk about thy joy to raise
 And keep thee cheery."

"Or when to muse on some sweet theme,
 Thou wand'rest out by Irvine's stream;
 Then, while thy thoughts a-soaring seem
 High as the lark,
 I'll quietly trot, nor break thy dream
 Wi' youf or bark."

Yes, Luath, in thy honest face,
 Such words in fancy I could trace,
 But little thocht that thy bit race
 Soon closed would be,
 And that 'twad be my waefu' case
 To mourn for thee."

But words would fail to tell the merit
 That thy wee breastie did inherit;
 To whinge or steal thou couldna bear it
 'Mang great or sma';
 For aye thou show'd a noble spirit
 To ane and a'.

And then come pleasure or come pain,
 Contentment aye in thee did reign;
 For tho' thy meal at times was plain,
 And somewhat humble,
 At morn or e'en 'twas ever ta'en
 Without a grumble."

And aft when at my humble ha'
 Some social cronies chanced to ca',
 Thy taper'd tail, as jet 's the crow,
 Thou'd cock fu' janty,
 And jump wi' joy to see us a'
 Sae hale and canty.

'Tis true, when out by glen or lea,
 Thou whiles in some sma' faut would be;
 But when rebuked, wi' thochtful e'e,
 Thou'd near me draw,
 And in repentance offer me
 Thy wee bit paw.

Methinks I hear some soulless loon,
 Wha ne'er was moved by pity's soun',
 Exclaim—"Why breathe this dolefu' croon
 Within our lug?
 The yelping thing that death struck down
 Was but a dog."

A dog! yes, just a dog; but, then,
 Dogs wiser are than mony men,
 And hae mair sense (as a' micht ken),
 And less presumption
 Than some wha try wi' tongue or pen
 To show their gumption.

And what's the friendship men display?
 Ah! truth compels me this to say—
 'Tis often feign'd and fades away
 Like morning dew;
 But, Luath, thine frae day to day
 Was ever true.

Then tho' unfeeling hearts should sneer,
 Thy memory I'll aye revere;
 And when to this sweet spot I steer,
 Whar green boughs wave,
 I'll mind thy worth, and drap a tear
 Owre thy wee grave.

THE LADS WI' THE KILT AND THE PLAID.

Hurrah for the lads wi' the kilt and the plaid!
 Hurrah for the lads wi' the kilt and the plaid!
 When bloody and dark rolls the battle's rough tide,
 How gallant the lads wi' the kilt and the plaid!

I trow they were miss'd 'mang the hills and the plains,
 Where the glorious spirit of Liberty reigns;
 Where their young hearts were fired wi' the patriot flame
 That blazes and burns round a Wallace's name.

When comes the fierce onset, and dangers are rife,
 True bold-hearted heroes they rush to the strife;
 The cauld sturdy steel they indignantly draw,
 The foemen they flee, or in thousands they fa'.

When "Scotland for ever" resounds o'er the field,
 Each arm with fresh vigour its weapon doth wield,
 Each eye kindles up with a valorous fire,
 And each heart for auld Scotia is proud to expire.

O, lang may the laurels that crown them be green!
 And lang may they be as they often have been,
 The shield of our country when dangers betide,
 The brave Scottish lads wi' the kilt and the plaid!

Then hurrah for the lads wi' the kilt and the plaid!
 Hurrah for the lads wi' the kilt and the plaid!
 When bloody and dark rolls the battle's rough tide,
 How gallant the lads wi' the kilt and the plaid!



HUGH BROWN.

"In every age," says the philosopher, "it is the visionaries that have lifted their race a step higher upon the world's great altar stairs that slope through darkness up to God." Hugh Brown, the author of a fine poem, entitled "The Covenanters," was such a visionary. He was a dreamer of dreams and a beholder of visions to such extent that he well nigh wrecked his prospects of earthly bliss and fortune. Forsaken by the world, he passed the gloamin' of life in obscurity and poverty amid the squalor and din of a dingy street in Glasgow, the only bright spot in the dark picture of his closing years being the friendly and generous intervention of a brother bard, who, by placing his case before the notice of Mr Gladstone, was instrumental in getting the impoverished poet a handsome gift from the Royal Bounty Fund. Hugh Brown was the son of a Darvel handloom weaver, and was born in Newmilns. He belonged to the same Covenanting stock as the Rev. J. Brown Paton, sometime Principal of the Theological Institute, Nottingham. Early set to toil at the loom, Hugh Brown's educational opportunities were limited, but although the Halls of Learning were never open to him, he succeeded in training himself to the extent of qualifying for the appointment of a school teacher. While working at the loom he composed an excellent poem on the death of Lord Byron, which first appeared in the "Scots Magazine," and drew from the editor of that periodical the remark that "the poem might be accepted as conclusive proof that the spirit of Burns was still living among the peasantry of his native country." The poem savours very little, however, of the style of Burns. In course of time Brown abandoned the loom, and entered upon the more congenial work of a country schoolmaster at Drumclog, the historical spot where his Covenanting forefathers

gained a decisive victory over Graham of Claverhouse and his troopers. From this school he removed to Barr School, Galston, in which, some years later, the celebrated Dr Taylor, of New York, was also for a short time teacher. While in Galston the poet completed his long poem on "The Covenanters," a composition by which his literary fame will long be sustained.

After conducting the school in Galston for a few years he was promoted to the charge of a parish school in Lanark, but at the Disruption he fearlessly threw in his lot with the Free Church body, and in consequence lost his appointment. A new school was, however, built for him in Lanark, and this he continued to conduct for a time, but eventually retired from the profession and took up residence in Glasgow, where, unfortunately, penury overtook him, and he spent the closing years of a protracted life in seclusion and poverty.

TO THE MEMORY OF LORD BYRON.

The harp of the minstrel is hung in the hall,
 And his fleeting existence is o'er;
 And still are its strings, as it sleeps on the wall,
 Like the fingers that swept it before.
 His eye, once so bright, has been robbed of its fire,
 His bosom once wild as the wave,
 Which the shrill note of liberty's trump could inspire,
 Or the heart-thrilling tones of the well-swept lyre,
 Is silent and still as the grave.

"He had evil within him"—we mark the dark shade
 When his bosom's deep secrets we scan;
 Yet his arm was still lifted the freeman to aid,
 And his deeds shed a lustre on man.
 If the black cloud of hate o'er his bosom did low'r,
 If he wished to the desert to flee,
 He was only the foe of the minion of pow'r,
 Who fiend-like stalks over the earth for an hour,
 But was ever the friend of the free.

The soft scenes of nature for him had no charms,
 The riv'let and fast-fading flow'r
 Awaked not his soul, like the horrid alarms
 When a nation is wreck'd in an hour.
 In the dark sweeping storm, by Omnipotence driven,
 In the flash and the long pealing roll;
 In the rocking of earth, in the frowning of heaven,
 When the pillars of nature seemed tumbling and riven,
 'Twas a beam of delight to his soul.

As he wandered, O Greece! o'er thy once hallowed ground,
 And stood o'er the warrior's grave,
 He heard but the voice of oppression around,
 And saw but the home of the slave—

As he gazed through the vista of ages gone by,
 In the glory and pride of the world—
 As he gazed on the ruins that round him did lie,
 It drew from his bosom a sorrowful sigh,
 Where Tyranny's flag was unfurl'd.

He tuned his wild harp o'er the ruins of Greece,
 His strains were impassioned and strong;
 They solaced his heart like a seraph of peace,
 While her freedom arose like a song.
 And when the bright sun of their liberty rose,
 His heart full of rapture adored;
 The morning had dawned on their fatal repose,
 Their slumbers were broken, they rushed on their foes,
 To shiver the chains they abhorr'd.

Did he fall in the struggle when Greece would be free?
 'Twas a star blotted out on their shore;
 But his hovering spirit yet triumphs with thee,
 Though his brave arm can aid thee no more.
 He expired as the torch of thy glory grew bright,
 In the glorious noon of the day;
 His triumph was short, like the meteor of night,
 As it flashes o'er heav'n with its long train of light—
 For like it he vanished away.

You have seen the bright summer-sun sink in the west,
 And the glories that shrouded him there,
 Like the splendours that dwell on the heav'n of the blest,
 Immortal, unclouded, and fair.
 So the halo of glory shall circle his name,
 His wreath shall eternally bloom;
 And Britain triumphant her Byron shall claim,
 As he shines with the great in the temple of Fame,
 The triumph of man o'er the tomb!

EXTRACT FROM "THE COVENANTERS."

Apostrophe to Loudoun Hill.

Where Loudoun Hill lifts high its conic form,
 And bares its rocky bosom to the storm,
 Time's varying change has come o'er man; but thou
 Stand'st with immortal nature on thy brow!
 As when the Roman soldier gazed on thee,
 Abrupt, and frowning in thy majesty,
 There Cæsar's sentinel his vigil kept,
 And Rome's proud legions in thy shadow slept;*
 There the tired eagle, like a guiltless thing,
 Paused in its flight and drooped its weary wing;
 Beneath thy brow their flag of death was furled,
 Whose life was war, whose empire was the world.

* In earlier times the remains of a Roman Camp were to be seen in the vicinity of Loudoun Hill.

Around thee are the hallowed fields of fame,
 That shed a lustre on the Scottish name:—
 Around thee Wallace raised his battle-cry—
 Thy rocky echoes thundered in reply!
 Free as the eagle on his native hills,
 Indignant saw, and felt his country's ills,
 Rushed with an angel's might, with spear and shield,
 And reaped the sword's red harvest of the field.
 Where the rude cairn, the time-worn altar? where
 The wanderer knelt as Freedom's worshipper—
 The cairn more sacred than the marble bust,
 Or pompous pile that hides the tyrant's dust—
 There ruthless hearts, and ruder hands have been,
 And passed the ploughshare o'er the hallowed scene;
 And left no relic, not a vestige near,
 To claim the sacred offering of a tear!

Around thee, Bruce, with flashing helm and plume—
 Who won his throne through battle's storm and gloom—
 Ranged his proud bannered host upon the plain
 Against the might of England's steel-clad men—
 The freeman's arm is strong, his heart is true—
 And this the chivalry of England knew;
 The Bruce's sword, the soldier's trusty spear,
 Fell like the lightning in its full career,
 The patriot King, with rapture-kindled eye,
 Triumphant saw the ruling phalanx fly;
 And victory's beacon light begin to burn,
 The glorious prelude to his Bannockburn.

Around thee met at morning's dawning hour,
 While night-dews sparkled on the summer flower,
 Our Covenanting sires! where calm and sweet,
 They found religion in their wild retreat!
 The still small voice of mercy, sweet, yet loud,
 Rose o'er the terrors of the bursting cloud;
 But when the tyrant stands on high to crush,
 And knowledge, freedom's faintest whispers hush,
 It is no false and fabled Argus stands—
 His hundred eyes are in his sleepless bands;
 Restless as day, to night no slumber given;
 They sleepless still outwatch the fires of heaven."

On John Knox preaching in the old Baronial Tower (Barr Castle) at Galston.

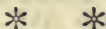
The owl may flap his sullen wing,
 And all his tuneless sorrows sing
 Around thy feudal walls;
 The winds upon their trackless way—
 Heaven's wild aerial minstrels, play
 Amid thy ruined halls.
 Rude fragment of a former age—
 A breath on history's fleeting page—
 Thy day of glory's gone;
 Where the bard's strains were proud and high,
 Where valour knelt 'neath beauty's eye—
 Now tenantless and lone.

Along thy battlements the tread
 Of mail-clad men to battle wed—
 The soldier and the slave—
 When life was chivalrous and brief—
 The worthless vassal of a chief,
 Who held it for the grave.

But with the tide of change there came
 Another sound, another name,
 That made even monarchs bow.
 No soldier's steel begirt his breast,
 No waving plume, or helmet crest,
 Was on his fearless brow.

The burning eloquence that rolled,
 Like thunder on the mountain wold,
 In mercy's hallowed home,
 Awoke strange echoes as it rung,
 Where nought but deeds of blood were sung,
 Beneath thy time-worn dome.

Thy stormy periods of the past,
 The trumpet's voice, the clarion's blast,
 Thy proud baronial power,
 Thy thousand flashing sheathless swords,
 Are nothing when a Knox's words
 Have hallowed thee, lone tower!



JOHN RAMSAY.

John Ramsay experienced in early life, as well as in his later years, the buffeting of misfortune, but like a true poet he tuned his harp to every breeze and gale that blew. He was born in Kilmarnock, but spent part of his boyhood in Dundonald, being subsequently apprenticed to the trade of carpet-weaving in his native town. After engaging in various callings without any marked degree of success, he was eventually forced to eke out a livelihood from the sale of his book of poems. In his travels, being at one time in Wordsworth's country, he called on his great contemporary, from whom he received kindly remarks about his poems and his prospects, mixed with not a little excellent and moral advice. Whether the noted bard's kindness ended there or by giving the wandering minstrel something to satisfy the body as well as the soul we are not informed. Ramsay died in Glasgow, and his remains were interred in the churchyard of Kilmaurs. His style is terse and vigorous, and some of his descriptive pieces are essentially poetic.

ON SEEING A REDBREAST SHOT.

All ruddy glow'd the dark'ning west,
 In azure were the mountains drest,
 Her veil of mist had evening cast
 O'er all the plain,
 And slowly home the reapers pass'd—
 A weary train.

On old Dundonald's hill I lay,
 And watch'd the landscape fade away;
 The owl come from the turret gray
 And skim the dell,
 While leaves from Autumn's sapless spray
 Down rustling fell.

And on a thorn that widely spread
 Its moss-grown, lowly-bending head,
 Where long the Winter storm had shed
 Its baneful power,
 And oft returning summer clad
 In leaf and flower—

A redbreast sang of sunshine gone,
 And dreary winter coming on;
 What though his strains had never known
 The rules of art?
 They woke to notes of sweetest tone
 The trembling heart;

Bade days return for ever fled,
 And hopes long laid among the dead,
 And forms in fairy colours clad,
 Confused appear;
 While melting Feeling kindly shed
 Her warmest tear.

When, lo! a flash, a thund'ring knell,
 That startled Echo in her cell,
 Dissolv'd the sweet, the pleasing spell,
 And hush'd the song:
 The little warbler lifeless fell
 The leaves among.

Thus the young bard, in some retreat
 Remote from learning's lofty seat,
 The critic, prowling, haps to meet,
 And strikes the blow,
 That lays him, with his prospects sweet,
 For ever low.

THOMAS MACQUEEN.

Thomas MacQueen, by virtue of superior talent, is entitled to be styled the poet-laureate of Kilbirnie. He followed the calling of a stonemason, and resided in early manhood at Barkip, in the parish of Dalry. In mid-life he emigrated with his family to Canada, and after various wanderings settled at Goderich, on Lake Huron—one of the two Canadian towns founded by his fellow-countryman and fellow-poet, the unfortunate John Galt, of Irvine.

At Goderich MacQueen was encouraged to start a periodical, which he called "The Signal," and throwing aside the trowel, he thenceforth devoted his whole energies to the management of this paper, taking up a strong position as the advocate of the people's rights, which gained him the applause of King "Demos," and in 1854 he was nominated candidate for the Canadian Parliament in the interests of the Reform Party, but suffered defeat. Subsequently he removed to Toronto, where he was for a time engaged on the staff of "The Canadian."

MacQueen's poems are reflective and melodious, and were much prized in earlier times, three separate volumes which were issued between the years 1836 and 1850 finding a ready sale.

The publication of his second volume, entitled "The Exile," drew forth the following amusing criticism from a reviewer in "Tait's Magazine": "Here is another rustic songster—Thomas MacQueen, mason, Barkip—who writes as well or better than the Ettrick Shepherd when he first boldly took up the trade of rhyme, without, as he tells us, the least idea of his own incapacity, and floundered on until he finally emerged a poet. If Mr M'Queen were either much better or a few degrees worse at his outset we should have better hopes of his future eminence. It is but fair to give an extract from a new aspirant; and we select the following as amiable in feeling, and as among the best pieces in the volume":—

VERSES ON THE DEATH OF WILLIAM
MOTHERWELL, Esq.

"Strike, Minstrel, strike the plaintive lyre,
With solitary tones and low;
With trembling hand fling from each wire
The mournful melody of woe.

Pour thy lone numbers o'er the dead:
 Sad is the tale thy harp must tell—
 The cypress wreath waves o'er the head
 Of Scotia's poet, Motherwell.

"Weep, Minstrel, weep: that heart is still
 That once in boyhood's early day
 Scanned o'er with sympathetic thrill
 Thy little, wild, unpolished lay;
 And with a gently glowing soul
 He stoop'd to lure thy muse along—
 Where rose the minstrel's vivid goal,
 On dizzy heights of nobler song.

"Plead, Minstrel, plead that no rude blast,
 With scowling fury sere his fame;
 Enshrine his failings in the past,
 As things the world forgot to name.
 All have their foibles—and few wear
 Their hearts outside their breast to show
 What keen remorse—what pangs severe—
 The owners of the foibles know.

"Pause, Minstrel, pause—the solemn tone
 That bears his rueful fun'ral knell.
 Pour on the soul the wailings lone
 Of friendship's chilling last farewell:
 It says the poet's little day
 Is bright and fleeting as a dream;
 And still the brighter is the ray,
 The sooner must it cease to gleam."

THE MARCH OF INTELLECT.

From the Moorland Minstrel (published 1841).

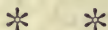
It came—and its step was as light as the breath
 Of the gentlest zephyr that fawns on the even—
 It came with a stillness as silent as death,
 But it breath'd a benignity soothing as heaven;
 It started—it gazed, as by stealth, far abroad,
 It mark'd the deep bondage of vassiliz'd man,
 It shrunk and recoiled, and it marvelled if God
 Had sketched such a doom in the primitive plan.

It came—there were whisp'rings abroad in the earth,
 Deep mutter'd-to deep in a mystified tone,
 Frowns, curses, and threats were heard issuing forth,
 And tortures and shackles were forging anon!
 It smiled on the fetters—it triumphed in scorn,
 It spurned the frail arm rear'd only to bind,
 Its march-hymn afar on the echoes was borne,
 Proclaiming the hast'ning redemption of mind!

It comes—and its whispers to thunders have grown—

All Nature elastic bends under its tread;
O'er ocean and earth its fire-chariots have flown,
And the lip of the mighty is quiv'ring with dread:
Corruption, convulsed, sees her nostrums turn weak,
And nods to Oppression, in speechless despair,
As the engines roll on that shall speedily break
The chains they had destined the millions to wear.

It will come! and the great ones of earth shall turn pale,
The yoke of the bondsman, enfeebled, shall shake;
All tyrants shall join in one desolate wail,
And Empire's foundations will tremble and quake;
Thrones shall crash, and the sceptre, beclothed with blood,
Will shiver to shreds in the hands of its lord,
And a voice, fierce and awful, will echo aloud,
That "Freedom, the Birthright of Mind, is restor'd!"



HENRY CRAWFORD.

The name Crawford occurs frequently in the annals of Scottish poetry, and works by authors bearing this surname generally reward the reader with something akin to pleasure. Henry Crawford was born in Dreghorn, but spent his early years in Irvine, where, like so many other youths who blossomed into poets, he was apprenticed to the trade of hand-loom weaving, at which he worked upwards of thirty years. Subsequently he emigrated to America to join three of his brothers in the State of Illinois. In his adopted country the poet took up the profession of a teacher, which he eventually gave up in favour of agricultural pursuits.

Before leaving Irvine Mr Crawford was one of the leading spirits of a debating society, and took a prominent part in the events which preceded and followed the passing of the Reform Bill. This irrepressible spirit he carried with him to America, and manfully took the side of Freedom and Justice in the great anti-slavery conflict.

Mr Crawford was a gifted musician as well as a poet, and composed airs to some of his own verses.

A YOUNG MAN'S SOLILOQUY.

I really wonder how it comes
That I am treated so,
No pretty girl in all the town
Will have me for her beau.

Tom, Dick, and Harry seem to please,
 And always cut a dash—
 I wonder if it is because
 I have not a moustache.

I've done my best to make it sprout,
 But find it all in vain;
 Instead of making hair to grow,
 It only gives me pain.
 The plans I've tried, did people know,
 It would me quite abash;
 For tho' I've rubbed and scrubbed each day,
 I yet have no moustache.

A friend of mine the other day
 (At least I thought him so)
 Said he would put me on a plan
 To make my moustache grow.
 He said—"When Luna's at the full,
 Quit using patent wash,
 And draw your thumb across your lip,
 And three times shout moustache."

* * * * *

I went to see Miss Jones one night,
 One of our pretty girls—
 She seemed to me as beauty's queen
 Enwreath'd with auburn curls.
 I bowed and offered her my hand—
 With an indignant flash,
 And full of rage, "O my!" she cried,
 "Why, child, you've no moustache!"

I went to see another girl,
 She was a lovely maid,
 And seemed to me 'twould Nina please
 Should I her serenade.
 But just as I began to sing
 Up flew the window sash—
 "Go home," she cried, "you silly fool,
 Till you have a moustache."

* * * * *

What awful misery I've borne,
 Near driven to despair—
 A thousand times I stroke my lip,
 But find there's nothing there.
 Talk of distress from broken banks,
 Or a commercial crash,
 They are but playthings when compared
 With *minus* a moustache!

I feel as if I cannot live
 And suffer as I do—
 It seems to me I willingly
 Could bid the world adieu.

My friends must keep an eye on me,
 Lest I do something rash,
 For life to me a burden is
 Without a nice moustache.

PRETTY LITTLE ALICE.

Pretty little daughter fair,
 Thou'rt a rosebud hanging where
 Honey'd sweets and nectars rare
 Fill each flow'ry chalice;
 But among the flowers I see,
 Sweetly scented tho' they be,
 No sweet flower can equal thee,
 Pretty little Alice.

Little birds with plumage fine,
 Sweetly sing from oak and pine,
 Or from bowers where tendrils twine,
 By our hills and valleys;
 But tho' decked in plumage bright,
 Cheering garden, lawn, and height,
 None like thee can give delight,
 Pretty little Alice.

From the mine the precious gem
 Sparkles on the diadem,
 And the gorgeous robes of them
 Throned in regal palace;
 But the gem from India's mine,
 Star-like though its beauties shine,
 Pales before that face of thine,
 Pretty little Alice.

Heaven protect thee from all ill,
 Teach thy heart to know His will,
 And never suffer thee to feel
 Other's scorn or malice;
 May sweet wisdom fill thy breast,
 Till among the spirits blest
 Thou wilt enter into rest,
 Pretty little Alice.



JOHN GILMOUR.

The season of song in the natural world is brief, and the silent Reaper has as little compunction for the loss of a tuneful minstrel as for a croaking frog. John Gilmour, who was the son of a farmer in Clerkland, near Stewarton, died before he had reached his twentieth year, but he was a scholar and a born poet, who left behind him sufficient evidence that had he been

spared to reach the crown of life's hill, the noon-day sun of his genius would have shed a lustre over the scenes and haunts of his boyhood. His poems are the outpouring of an original mind, and shew much fertility of invention as well as strength and beauty of expression. Several of his translations from the Greek and Latin tongues are excellent and emulate the efforts of the most skilful translator.

In October, 1824, he entered the University of Glasgow, where he prosecuted his studies for three succeeding sessions, but was compelled to abandon them while attending his fourth session, and leaving Glasgow he returned to his father's home, where he expired within a few months.

TO THE MEMORY OF MICHAEL BRUCE.

Ill-fated votary of the luckless lay!

Behind a cloud thy dawning genius rose,
Hope dimly smiled and promised brighter day,
But fate was envious and would interpose.

A glimmering ray pervades the cloud, and soon
Shall blaze in splendour—the meridian scene—
Ah, no! eternal night involves thy noon,
And what thou wert shews what thou wouldst have been.

A knell to genius, and a knell to pride,
That rising, independent Bruce is gone!
A knell to giddy youth, that death may ride
His ploughshare o'er the bloom of twenty-one!

Let him who never saw a flattering sky
Delude the presage of the sagest swain;
Let him who never heaved a single sigh
From unexpected woe, nor hoped in vain;

Let him inquire and wonder how it was
That he was doomed to perish in the shade;
Frost often nips the sweetest flower, alas!
For such when sweetest rears the tenderest blade.

Transported early to a happier sphere,
He might have flourished long, and flourished fair,
But poverty attends and want is near,
Cold, cold, and barren, who can flourish there?

He saw consumption haste his life away,
Nor did he vainly fret, repine, or weep—
While ruthless death secured him for his prey,
Resigned and calm, he sung his soul to sleep.

* * * * *

Ah! never shall I read his simple tale,
Or con the plaintive magic of his line,
But such a wish shall mingle with my wail,
That Bruce's resignation may be mine!

Fame heaves a sigh for worth so early fled,
And only asks of sympathy a tear
To wet the turf that wraps his lowly bed
And soothe his spirit haply hovering near.



REV. HUGH SMITH, M.D.

Hugh Smith, who was born in Irvine of humble parentage, furnishes a notable example of how zeal and plodding perseverance can burst the bonds of environment and turn the laugh on adverse circumstances. It is as a man of remarkable parts rather than a poet that he is entitled to brief notice in these pages.

We have already seen that the monotonous trade of handloom weaving was distasteful to several of our humble born but ambitious poets, and so it proved in the case of Hugh Smith, who, fostering a desire to better his position, published a book of his own musings in order to raise funds sufficient to enable him to enter on a course of university training for the ministry, and eventually raised himself to pulpit elevation, his first pastoral charge being in Brechin. After filling several pulpits in Scotland he emigrated to Australia, and, having previously studied medicine, he settled at Newstead, Castle Maine, as a medical practitioner.

His poems exhibit the faults of an inexperienced versifier, but it should be remembered that they were composed before he had completed his twenty-first year.



ALEXANDER WINTON BUCHAN.

Knowledge has set her throne on the topmost peak of a high and steep mountain, and no one who would ascend thither can glide up in an elevator. The career of A. W. Buchan affords another good example of the indefatigable and energetic student pushing his way manfully up the rugged slopes of learning. After being some time an assistant teacher in his native town of Kilmarnock, he was appointed to the charge of a small school in the parish of Craigie, returning to Kilmarnock some two years later as teacher in Clark Street School.

He was not permitted to stay long in Kilmarnock, however, as a committee of gentlemen in Irvine, hearing of his high qualifica-

tions, offered him the mastership of a school in Halfway, which he maintained from 1838 till 1843, when he was promoted to Glasgow as headmaster of St. James's Parish School. This school he conducted for fifteen years with so much ability that it became known as one of the best educational institutions in the city. His professional career as a teacher was continued some time after his severance from this school, during which he conducted a private academy in West Regent Street. He ultimately retired from active life, and settled in Saltcoats, where he spent the remainder of his days. Devotion to truth is the dominant note of Mr Buchan's effusions.

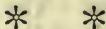
OUR DEAR SCOTTISH THISTLE.

Dedicated to Glasgow Saint Andrew's Society.

Come fill up your glasses, and drink to the toast
 Of Scotland, our dear native land,—
 In the van of the nations may't still be her boast
 For honour, truth, freedom, to stand.
 And stand there she will if her name and her fame
 Rest with us—as in part they must do—
 For within us is burning the patriot flame,
 And we swear to the death to be true.

O, the Rose, Thistle, Shamrock, are lovely entwined,
 And each has a grace of its own;
 In the Shamrock let Erin her green symbol find,
 Let the sweet Rose be England's alone;
 But ours is the Thistle, fresh, hardy, and bold,
 The emblem of freedom and love.
 O say, shall it stand less erect than of old?
 Shall it ere cease our bosoms to move?

No, Scotland, no, never; but true to the trust
 Of thy glory we ever shall be;
 Though rejoicing that peace leaves thy claymore to rust,
 We would draw it for freedom and thee.
 O, the Forth shall refuse to the ocean to flow,
 And the Abbey Craig sink in the plain,
 Ere our dear Thistle droop Rose or Shamrock below,
 And forget her proud place to maintain.



JOHN ORR.

John Orr, a native of Kilbirnie, had attained the sixtieth year of his age ere the fruits of his muse were given to the public in booklet form. Although his poems are not of a very high order, they were appreciated in local circles, where as a

skilled ornithologist as well as a writer of verse he was well known. In his contributions to the peasant literature of Ayrshire he invariably sought for inspiration in local scenes and subjects, which may account for the hearty reception given to his musings by friends and neighbours. His collection of birds, all stuffed and preserved by his own skilful manipulation, was at one time the wonder of Kilbirnie.

* *

REV, MATTHEW DICKIE.

Matthew Dickie, who was an aspirant after poetical honours and had some pieces published in Mr Edwards' "Modern Scottish Poets," was the son of a farmer in East Raws, parish of Kilmarnock, but spent the greater part of his childhood on the farm of Ploughland, near Dundonald, where for a time he engaged in farm work and also learned the trade of a tile-moulder. The bent of his mind, however, was toward higher and better work, and he adopted the calling of a city missionary, eventually qualifying himself for the ministry, his first pastoral charge being in Old Cumnock, where he ministered for about nine years, and at the end of that time accepted a call from a congregation in Bristol. Mr Dickie was an intimate friend of the Rev. Dr Taylor, of New York, who published a memoir of his life with selections from his writings.

* *

HUGH KERR.

The sons of St. Crispin have ever been a studious and intelligent family, and doubtless will continue so until the last one has said farewell to his last last. We wonder how many of them ever have considered

"How much a man is like his shoes,
For instance both a soul may lose;
Both have been tanned, both are made tight
By cobblers. Both get left and right.
Both need a mate to be complete,
And both are made to go on feet.
They both need healing, oft are sold,
And both in time will turn to mould.
They are both trod upon, and both
Will tread on others nothing loth.
Both have their ties, and both incline
When polished in the world to shine."

Hugh Kerr may have reaped honour on account of his lyrical gift, but none the less did he win it as a member of the "gentle craft," for as a shoemaker he is said to have had few equals in the trade. When his first booklet of verse was published it was favourably noticed by George Gilfillan, the once famous critic; a second volume of Kerr's poems being also well received by the reviewers. Mr Kerr upholds with John Gilmour the poetical traditions of Stewarton.



JOAN KELLY.

This authoress adds another to the long list of lowly minstrels belonging to Ayrshire. She was born in Irvine, and lived there with her widowed mother until the latter was eighty-four years of age, when the ruthless breaker of love's more than mortal ties divided them, and the brightest star of poor Joan's life was extinguished forever. Left friendless and in a manner helpless, the parish authorities found it necessary to remove her to their Combination Palace near her native town, but she longed to breathe what she called "the sweet, pure air of liberty," and took unkindly to her new home. With the view of raising funds for her self-support, a small volume of her poems was published, but the proceeds did little more than cover publishing expenses, and the hope maintained by the poetess that she might by these means regain her independence was forever blasted.

IN MEMORY OF THE LATE COUNTESS OF EGLINTON AND WINTON.

I've seen the beauteous king of day
In splendid glory rise,
Chasing the darker clouds away
And dazzling eager eyes.

All felt his pure enlivening beams;
The wealthy and the poor;
The monarch in his gilded halls;
The peasant at his door.

And as I gazed with upturned eye,
I've marked the threat'ning cloud
Come sweeping on with sudden force,
And wrap him in its shroud.

And sad, methinks, has been thy fate,
Earth's gem of purest ray!
The tender orphan's gentle friend,
The lonely widow's stay.

All bright and beautiful wert thou,
Blooming within thy bower;
But death has come with silent tread,
And nipped the precious flower.

Now still and cold that form doth lie,
Clasped in death's stern embrace;
And closed are now those sparkling eyes,
And pale that beauteous face.

And now that form, surpassing fair,
Is laid in death's dark room,
To slumber till the trumpet sound
Shall wake thee from the tomb.

But though thy form corruption sees,
I trust thy spirit stands,
Clothed in those spotless robes so bright,
Within the better land.

There in that land of untold bliss
May'st thou with rapture greet
When time is o'er, the friends beloved
Around the mercy seat.



JOHN DAVIDSON BROWN.

We hear it often remarked that poets are born, not made, and we believe they are borne frequently on the wings of imagination, forgetting they were made to walk the earth like ordinary mortals. But however high they soar, their weakness, like that of the aeroplane, lies in their liability to turn a sudden somersault in mid-air, and thus evoke disaster. The wayward and peripatetic career of John Davidson Brown, who was born in the parish of Dunlop, suggests that capricious imagination was his undoing. While engaged as a school teacher in the parish of Lochwinnoch he gave way somewhat to intemperate habits, and a desire for change besetting him he emigrated to America, but soon tired of his adopted country and hurried back to his native shores. On returning home he published "Adventures in the United States," which was followed by a book entitled "The Bard of Glazert, with Miscellaneous Poems and Songs." Thus he became known as "The Bard of Glazert," a title which he seemed proud to bestow on himself.

His literary work attracted favourable notice, and obtained a post for him on the staff of the "Ayr Observer," but a volume of ballads which he subsequently issued was knocked on the head by the critic's truncheon. This greatly disheartened the bard, and was probably the means of causing him to leave the country a second time. At anyrate he again yielded to his besetting temptation, and as all trace of his later career has been lost it is assumed that he ultimately returned to the United States and died there. His ballad compositions are diffusive and unequal, but some of his shorter pieces have a certain merit of their own.

The following piece should appeal to the optimist, even if he is no poet:—

'TIS FOLLY TO BE SAD.

O, sing a song of gladness, and let us merry be:
We ne'er will droop in sadness, tho' fortune fickle be!
Be blythesome and be cheery, to sigh in grief, 'tis mad;
Ne'er let the heart grow weary—'tis folly to be sad.

Tho' fortune may deny us her favours for a while,
We never will be envious of those who win her smile.
'Gainst fate ne'er feel resentment, with lightsome heart be glad,
There's richness in contentment—'tis folly to be sad.

Let poverty ne'er grieve us, our pleasures to destroy;
Though dearest friends deceive us, ne'er let it cloud our joy.
Be blythesome aye and cheery, to sigh in grief 'tis mad;
Ne'er let the heart grow weary—'tis folly to be sad.

JOHN BARLEYCORN.

John Barleycorn, thou warst o' deils,
Ere met by rantin', rovin' chieils,
Aft thou hast driven me owre the fiel's
O' luckless folly,
Then plunged me deep, head over heels,
In melancholy.

Though ills on ills thou aft hast sent me,
And they were always mair than plenty;
I dinna now misrepresent thee,
The truth I tell:
I sairly rue I ever kent thee,
Thou demon fell.

Aye, though thy praises hae been sung
By mony bards in Scottish tongue,
Till far and near thy name has rung
In sangs o' glee;
Thou art a foe to auld and young
Wha mell wi' thee.

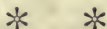
When fashed wi' care or carkin' grief,
 Or crossed in love, o' cares the chief,
 Fools aft run to thee for relief
 In luckless hour.
 Thou steals their senses like a thief
 When in thy power.

For though they drain thee frae the pot,
 In hopes their cares may be forgot,
 Thou makes ilk ane a tippling sot
 Soon by degrees;
 The remedy is worse, I wot,
 Than the disease.

Soon want, disease, and crime assails—
 Their health and constitution fails;
 Thou thrusts them off fair virtue's rails,
 That line sublime,
 To rot in poorhouses and jails,
 Debased in crime.

Yea! thou'rt a thief to health and purse;
 To fell disease a faithful nurse;
 Crime's instigator; virtue's curse;
 A traitor foul;
 A life destroyer—what is worse—
 Thou slays the soul.

Fareweel! fareweel! John Barleycorn,
 No more at noon, at eve, at morn,
 I'll quaff thee frae a cup or horn;
 Frae glass or bottle;
 To war against thee I hae sworn
 I'll be teetotal.



WILLIAM LOGAN.

William Logan, one of the best known of the Kilbirnie bards, was born at Kilbirnie in 1821, and died there in the 48th year of his age. For some time his calling was that of a teacher, but later in life he occupied the honourable position of cashier in the firm of Messrs W. & J. Knox. To his poetic gifts was added a fondness for antiquarian studies, which gained him the friendship of a few eminent kindred spirits, all of whom have now, like our bard, passed into the Silent Land. Mr Logan's muse delighted to sing of the commonplaces of life rather than soar among high ideals in the third or fourth firmament.

Several of his lyrical pieces are worthy of perpetuation, but perhaps his best effort is that entitled "Jeanie Gow," which

appeared originally in the fourth volume of "The Ayrshire Wreath," published by M'Kie, of Burnsiana fame.

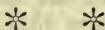
JEANIE GOW.

Ye hameless glens and waving woods
Where Garnock winds along,
How aft in youth's unclouded morn
Your wilds I've roved among;
There ha'e I heard the wanton birds
Sing blithe on every bough;
There first I met and wooed the heart
O' bonnie Jeanie Gow.

Dear Jeanie then was fair and young,
And bloom'd as sweet a flower
As ever deck'd the garden gay,
Or lonely wild-wood bower;
The warbling lark at early dawn,
The lamb on mountain brow,
Had ne'er a purer, lighter heart
Than bonnie Jeanie Gow.

Her faither's lowly, clay-built cot
Rose by Glengarnock side;
And Jeanie was his only stay—
His darling and his pride.
Aft ha'e I fled the dinsome town,
The vain heart's gaudy show,
And strayed among the ferny knowes
Wi' bonnie Jeanie Gow.

But, ah! these blithesome blinks o' joy
Were soon wi' gloom o'ercast,
For Jeanie dear was torn awa'
By death's untimely blast.
Ye woods, ye wilds, and songsters sweet,
Ye canna cheer me now,
Since a' my cherished hopes ha'e gane
Wi' bonnie Jeanie Gow.



ROBERT GEMMELL.

Robert Gemmell, who occupies no insignificant place among the past poets of Cuninghame, was born in Irvine, and after a moderate schooling was apprenticed to the shipbuilding trade, but in early manhood enlisted as a soldier of the Queen. At the end of four years' service he was induced to purchase his discharge from the army, and returning home he obtained a situation as clerk to a railway contractor. When his services were no longer required, he repaired once more to his native

town, and found employment in an iron foundry. He afterwards entered the service of the Glasgow and South-Western Railway Company, with whom he remained upwards of thirty-two years.

Mr Gemmell was from his earliest boyhood an ardent lover of books. Some of his poetical pieces are of sufficient merit to place him well forward in the ranks of Ayrshire's bardic brigade.

A LIFE SKETCH.

(From the "Village Beauty.")

A cottage 'neath wide-spreading trees,
A brook, and sheltered place to sit,
With sloping banks, where humming bees
From flower to flower unceasing flit;
And distant hills in verdure clad,
Where sheep delightful pasture find;
While from the scene a little lad
Goes forth, but turns to look behind.

'Mid the great city's noisy din,
With many an aspiration high,
He finds distinction hard to win,
But hope, when kindled, may not die.
With firm resolve his upward way
He keeps unmoved, and in the end
Bright fortune sheds her glittering ray,
And social honours lustre lend.

The goal is reached, but years have sped,
And age its hand on him hath laid:
The buoyancy of youth is fled,
And care its mark hath also made.
He seeks again that landscape fair,
The home so loved in life's young day,
But finds all changed, no friend is there,
Naught left his sorrow to allay.

Both wealth and fame are doubtless good,
And should be sought to some extent;
But few have rightly understood
The means thro' which to find content.
Those who great blessings still impart
With sympathies embracing all,
And goodness seek with head and heart,
No circumstance can e'er appal!

THE CUCKOO.

As through the wood in gladsome spring
With spirits light I take my way,
And things around remembrance bring
Of some I loved in life's young day;

In dreamy mood old scenes arise
 And present recollections cheer,
 While suddenly in sweet surprise
 The cuckoo's voice enchants the ear.

This pleasing bird has proved the theme
 For many a rich and thrilling lay,
 Whose note when heard, like love's fair dream,
 Exerts in youth a magic sway;
 And even age enjoyment feels
 At this bright season of the year,
 While high 'mong all that Spring reveals
 The cuckoo's voice enchants the ear.

O time, when all is bright romance,
 And happiness hath banished care,
 While love, each vision to enhance,
 Makes life a thousand-fold more fair;
 What bliss beneath the hawthorn shade
 To hear the tale of love sincere,
 While sweetly from the distant glade
 The cuckoo's voice enchants the ear.

O, many a thrilling sound is heard
 Throughout fair Nature's vast domain,
 Which soul and sense alike have stirred
 And memory charmed will still retain;
 But nothing hath such wondrous power,
 Or comes in tones so rich and clear,
 As when in some sweet woodland bower
 The cuckoo's voice enchants the ear.

While life to some is fair and bright
 With love and hope alike supreme,
 To others it is dark as night,
 Replete with woe—a troubled stream;
 And yet while ills their shadows cast,
 Green spots amid the waste appear;
 And when we dream of joys long past,
 The cuckoo's voice enchants the ear.

Delightful bird! no sombre gloom
 Hath for a moment chilled thy joy;
 Thy path is still where flow'rets bloom
 And winter's blast can ne'er annoy.
 And while bright skies refuse to fade
 Thou wilt not seek another sphere:
 Where warmth and beauty are displayed
 The cuckoo's voice enchants the ear.



JOHN DICKIE.

John Dickie, author of a prose volume, entitled "Words of Faith, Hope, and Love," was born in Irvine, and studied for

the ministry, but, being of a delicate constitution, his health broke down, and, after seeking the best medical advice obtainable in Glasgow and in London, he decided to abandon his college courses. Returning to his native town, he entered into a grocery business, which had belonged to his father, but in course of time his strong bias towards mission work led him to adopt the calling of a missionary, first in his native town, and afterwards in Kilmarnock, in which latter town he laboured for about twenty years, subsequently returning to Irvine, where he spent the closing period of his life.

HYMN—THE GARMENT OF PRAISE.

I heard a little bird upon a leafy spray
 Pour such a gush of song as if 'twould sing its life away;
 No fear of prowling hawk, no dread of coming wrong,
 No prudent, anxious, manlike cares could spoil that joyous song.

Learn from this happy bird a lesson, downcast soul;
 For ceaseless mercies let the stream of ceaseless praises roll;
 Sing when thy strength is firm, and sing when it decays;
 When comforts come, or comforts go, for both give equal praise.

From God's unchanging love they both alike proceed,
 His perfect wisdom fits them all exactly to thy need;
 No creature of His hand He loveth more than thee;
 Let no one sing its tribute song with heart more glad and free.

Then sing His countless gifts, and sing for sins forgiven;
 Sing that the HIGHEST calls thee SON, and sealeth thee for Heaven,
 And ever at the Cross, where Jesus bought thee dear,
 O! let the tenderest notes of praise pour forth thy heart's deep cheer.

He traineth thee for song—for endless song above—
 To lead Heaven's burning seraph-choirs in ecstasies of love.
 Then learn thy lesson well, and practise now to praise,
 In joy and sorrow, storm and calm, thy thankful raptures raise.



THOMAS BRUCE.

Thomas Bruce, son of the late Rev. Dr John Bruce, Newmilns, was educated for the calling of a spiritual shepherd, and was licensed as a gospel preacher of the United Presbyterian Church. In our youthful days we frequently heard his voice in the Scottish pulpit, and knew him to be one of the thoughtful wooers of the "Tuneful Nine," who frequent lonely places in quest of Poesy. Mr Bruce eventually abandoned the

clerical profession, and about forty years ago set sail for Australia, where he engaged chiefly in agricultural pursuits. While a preacher Mr Bruce published a long poem, entitled "The Summer Queen," and a prose volume, entitled "Man's Part in the Chorus of Creation." One of his latest published pieces, entitled "Irwindale," treats of the familiar scenes of the author's youth. In the opening verses he sings the charms of Irvine Water, which, notwithstanding he is an octogenarian, still hold his heart in bondage.

"O gentle River! At the core
 Of this great Southern Sea
 Thy true-born child of full fourscore
 Still fondly dreams of thee;
 E'en of the rugged crag that towers
 High o'er thy fountain-head,
 And of the shady woodland bowers
 Low bending o'er thy bed;
 Of banks where from the golden broom
 Full spring-tide splendour flows,
 Toned by the mellow ruby bloom
 Of the wild wayside rose.

* * * * *

O, Irwin, thine the tracks that gave
 First steps of life free scope,
 With all a simple heart might crave
 Of careless joy and hope!
 Would God my feet once more might press
 The turf thy waters lave,
 And that my ear again might hear
 The murmur of thy wave!"

The following lines by Mr Bruce are reminiscent of the days when handloom weaving was the staple industry of New-milns and of almost every other village in Ayrshire.

REED NOTES.

PART I.

A weaver sat upon his loom
 Ae dark December day,
 Sad thoughts o'er cast his face with gloom,
 An' slow he plied the lay.

His cheek was wan, his e'e was dim,
 He was in waefu' fettle;
 Life's burden it sat sair on him,
 An' slow he ca'ed the shuttle.

Sad an' slow the shots he threw,
 An' slow he trod the treadles,
 An' slow the harness-flow'rs they grew,
 As see-saw gaed the heddles.

The weaver's heart was fu' o' care,
 An heavy was his e'e;
 For he was doomed to battle sair
 Wi' cruel povertie.

Snirly and brittle was the yarn,
 Aye snappin' as he wove;
 The waft would hardly lea' the pirn,
 An' rotten was the rove.

Trade it was dull and wages sma',
 Tatties an' kitchen dear;
 An' it took mony a weary ca',
 His daily way to clear.

Trade it was slack an' wages sma',
 An' waur than that to bear—
 Agents an' Corks, in ruthless thraw,
 Sought out each scob an' tear.

Down gaed their glasses on his claith,
 Where'er a shot seem'd missin',
 Wi' stoppages they were na laith
 His sma' returns to lessen.

Wi' damages they ground him down,
 Fu' mony a cut returnin';
 They sware he was a feckless loon,
 An' didna heed his mournin'.

The weaver mused on ilka ill
 An' wrang he did endure;
 Nursin' what might wi' sorrow kill,
 But ne'er could work a cure.

The weaver thought upon his wife,
 He thought upon his weans;
 He thought upon his daily strife,
 To win for them sma' gains.

He thought, I ween, on parritch thin,
 On coorse an' duddy claes,
 On sair-worn sarks or clouted shoon
 That scarce wad hide the taes.

He thought upon the rich an' great,
 Wha neither toil nor spin;
 He thought upon the puir estate
 That he himsel' was in.

Ilk time upon that waefu' wab
 The weaver turned his e'e,
 He aye the mair was like to sab
 Wi' grief an' misery.

He thought upon the dolefu' weird
 That he was doom'd to dree;
 Toilin' for them that wer'na sweet
 To clip his sma' bawbee.

He thought upon the greedy gleds
 That rook the puir for profit;
 An' weel might wust for them het beds
 In that ill place ca'd Tophet.

That last, I wot, cam' frae the Deil,
 Or some ane o' his clan,
 Aye fain to stir up thoughts no leal
 Within the heart o' man.

Noo that his wits are crazed wi' wae,
 I'll lay for him a snare;
 An' I'll make sure, sae thought the fae,
 To girn him like a hare.

Thus sad sat he upon his loom
 That drear December day,
 In waefu' mood an' fretfu' fume,
 Slow ca'in' at the lay.

PART II.

The weaver sat upon his loom,
 That mirk an' dreary day;
 But noo frae aff his face the gloom
 Began to pass away.

Sic pinin' couldna dae him gude,
 Or help his grief to scare;
 But syne cam' on a better mood
 That took him unaware.

I ween not o' his ain intent
 Cam' on that happy tide,
 For weel I wot or e'er he kent,
 It cam' by help o' Gude.

As through a cloud breaks forth the light,
 There cam' a gleam o' grace,
 That cheer'd him in his waefu' plight
 An'eased his sair distress.

Now better thoughts he ca'd to mind,
 Thoughts o' that Mighty One
 Wha on the puir in heart looks kind
 Frae His high place aboon.

Syne thought he o' the ways o' God
 Unto his creature man;
 Wha gars us tread a rugged road
 To tak' us by the han'.

Syne thought he on the wab o' life,
 How swift its shots are cast;
 How a' its flow'rs, or scant, or rife,
 Are woven out at last.

He thought upon the warp an' woof,
 Serv'd by a righteous han'
 That maun be wrought to stan' the proof
 O' mair than mortal man.

He thought upon the mystic threads
 That we are weavin' ever,
 For Him wha watches weel, an' heeds
 The pattern we endeavour.

He thought upon the grand design
 Sketched out by One unseen;
 How it should rise baith fair an' fine
 Till the last shot's ca'ed in.

And now he saw 'twas nae puir stroke
 That God had sent to him,
 If at life's wab he didna boke,
 Nor wrought it slack an' slim.

The warp an' woof were spun wi' sleight
 Surpassin' human skill;
 The pattern weel might stan' the light,
 Fair woven to the keel.

The wab cam' frae a maister wha
 Will fairly try each weaver,
 Nor mak' the maist o' scob or gaw,
 But pay without a swither.

Thus better thought he o' the matter,
 An' buckled his sark sleeve,
 To drive the lay wi' cheerfu' clatter,
 An' gar the shuttle srieve.

Fu' blithely now his arm he swang,
 An' fast he trod the treadles,
 An' fair the curtain flow'rs they sprang,
 As lichtly danced the heddles.

The waft mair freely left the pirn,
 As in sic mood he wove;
 Less fashious were the threads o' yarn
 An' no' sae frush the rove.

As his sair heart threw aff its wae
 Ilk thing changed clean its nature;
 The vera Hawk, that bird o' prey,
 Seem'd no' sae ill a cratur.

For now a' things in fairer light,
 The light o' love were seen;
 An' he wove on wi' a' his might,
 Weel strengthen'd frae abune.

For the benefit of those not initiated in hand-loom weavers'

nomenclature the author appends the following notes to the above poem:—

Agents—Men who transact between manufacturer and weaver.

Corks—Masters.

Cut—Piece of cloth.

Gaw—A gap in the cloth.

Glasses—Small lenses used to examine the web.

Harness—A species of flowered muslin.

Hawk—Not that of natural history.

Heddles—Threads by means of which the warp is cloven to receive the weft.

Keel—A red or blue mark on the warp shewing where the piece should end.

Lay—Frame by which the weft is driven home.

Rove—Weft which forms the pattern.

Scob—A flaw, weft not interwoven with warp.

Shot—A thread of weft thrown by the shuttle.

Stoppages—Deduction on account of damages.

Stroke—Term applied by the weaver to his web.

Treadles—Wooden shafts by which with his feet the weaver moves the heddles.

WHAT OF THE TRIDENT?

Long live Britannia's ocean-sway,
 Heroic and humane,
 Full freedom of the world's seaway
 Still onward to maintain.

And to secure Earth's peaceful shores
 From grievous daily dread
 Of hostile feet, of measured beat,
 Or fierce and ruthless tread.

Since with a price our fathers bought
 The ancient regal sign,
 Shall now its virtue come to naught,
 Poured out like stale, sour wine?

If need be, shall we not once more
 Repeat the fearless past,
 When "hearts of oak" met desperate odds
 With flag nailed to the mast?

Think shall we not of life-blood shed
 On every tear-washed sea?
 Shall countless graves of deathless dead
 By us forgotten be?

Of valiant deeds at no light cost
 By their brave grandsires done
 Shall not their children proudly boast
 As ages onward run?

But words *sans* deeds are, sooth to say,
Like blossoms without fruit,
Or plants that spring to fall away
Through fatal lack of root!

So let us now make full resolve
At need to do and dare,
And ever more as years revolve
For grave events prepare.

Well is it that our Mother dear,
At length aroused from sleep,
In drowsy dream shall no more slack
Her ward of the Great Deep;

Whose gates and highways she must hold
Safe from rude alien sway,
Or face as never from of old
A sheerly downward way.

For old Britannia's grand advance,
Unstayed from day to day,
Throughout her Empire's vast expanse
Ten thousand children pray,

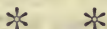
Who for her crave, as leal hearts should,
Health, strength, and length of days,
Spent well and wisely for the good
Of man, and to God's praise.

To our Great Mother let us cling
As kindly children must,
And in the shelter of her wing
Put never-failing trust.

Compelled to keep her flag unfurled,
We, of the Southern Main,
Will stand at bay 'gainst half the world
Her prestige to sustain.

God save the King and keep serene
His wise and gentle sway,
For him and for our peerless Queen
As with one voice we pray!

Eke may He of free grace uphold
Our wise and good Premier,
With a firm hand, not rash yet bold,
Through calm and storm to steer.



WILLIAM LAMBERTON.

William Lamberton, of Kilmaurs, who wrote some pleasing verses without soaring into the higher altitudes of poetry, was apprenticed to the trade of shoemaking, at which he worked

some seven or eight years, but eventually entered upon a course of study with a view to qualifying for the clerical profession. He found, however, some difficulties in the way of attaining his object, and drifted into the calling of a lay-preacher, in which capacity he was long and favourably known. Mr Lamberton was associated for about fifteen of the best years of his life with the Kilmarnock Artillery Volunteers.



HUGH M'KENZIE.

It is remarkable how so many of our Ayrshire bards escaped being born with a silver spoon in their mouths, and had to be content with the smallest possible share of rudimentary schooling, their poverty-stricken parents setting them to learn a trade when scarcely emerged from childhood. Hugh M'Kenzie, who was born in Kilmarnock long before the era of School Boards, was set to learn the trade of shoemaking at the age of eleven, and, although he had to toil from early morning till eight o'clock, and as frequently ten in the evening, he contrived somehow to find leisure for cultivating his literary tastes. In 1859 he was awarded second prize for a Burns centenary song, which added not a little to his rising reputation as a devotee of the rural muse. He is the author of several other Burnsiana poems which do credit to his poetical talents.

BURNS CENTENARY PRIZE SONG.

Ye ask a sang in Burns's praise!
I fear 'twad ding my harp to staves
To sing o' him or yet his lays
 Wi' half the fire o' Robin.

For Robin's harp was strung wi' glee;
Its every note was poesy,
That filled wi' wildest ecstasy
 The matchless sangs o' Robin.

Nae theme cam' wrang to Robin's lyre,
Be't Satire's dart, or Patriot's fire,
Or soothing Love—'twould never tire—
 'Twas a' the same to Robin.

The Muse she left her seat abune,
And Coila's harp she took him doon;
'Twas a' in fettle and in tune
 When it was gi'en to Robin.

And watching she stood by his side,
 When first his notes our bardie tried;
 She heard its tones and smiling cried—
 “They’ll a’ be proud o’ Robin.”

She bade him sing in Scottish phrase
 Auld Scotland’s dells and broomy braes,
 Till Scots unborn the sang wad raise
 In praises o’ their Robin.

That harp our bard aye kept in tune,
 Sae true to Nature was its soun’,
 The Muse wi’ holly did him croon
 The Prince o’ Poets, Robin.

* * * * *

Auld Scotland’s waes he sairly mourn’d,
 And for her wrangs his bosom burn’d,
 While lordling’s smiles he proudly spurned—
 “A man’s a man,” said Robin.

Hypocrisy he sairly lash’d;
 Grim Superstition stood aghast,
 And Bigotry was sair abash’d,
 In presence o’ our Robin.

Then let us toast our poet’s name—
 The highest on the roll of fame!
 Although a hundred years ha’e gaen
 Since first we saw our Robin.

To Scotland’s bairns his name is dear—
 The ploughman bard they’ll aye revere;
 Till Time winds up his hindmost year
 We’ll sing the sangs o’ Robin.

* *

JOHN NICOL.

John Nicol, who was born at a farmhouse in the parish of Ardrossan, entered in boyhood the service of Messrs Merry & Cunningham, with whom he remained for the long period of forty-five years. During this time he was employed successively at Ardrossan, Ardeer, Inkerman, and Glengarnock. In Glengarnock he passed the greater part of his life, and on retiring from office in 1892 was appropriately rewarded by his employers for long and signally faithful services. His numerous friends and acquaintances likewise memorized the event by presenting him with a purse of sovereigns and sundry other gifts. Mr Nicol spent the last few years of his life in Beith at the residence of his daughter, Mrs Daly.

His poems embrace a very wide variety of subjects, and show the author to have had a good command of the English Dictionary. Several of his themes are aught but conventional, and embrace subjects which the fewest number of poets could successfully transmute into genuine poetic coin.

The following stanzas were suggested by seeing a frog taken alive from a deep ironstone pit:—

Thou are not beautiful, but interesting,
 And it is curious how we two have met:
 This interview is not at thy requesting,
 And evidently matter of regret.
 I heard you squeak: say, how then could you get
 Entombed within this solid iron rib,
 Five hundred feet from daylight neatly set,
 A living kernel in thy antique crib?
 No fissure vein or geologic jumble,
 But just a space where you could hardly tumble.

Have you in the great ferny forest paddled
 And been o'erlaid with folds of gathering clay;
 Some era long before Eve's babes were cradled
 When Behemoth held undisputed sway?
 And if you had existence far away
 Ere man had habitation or a name,
 Why not live on till that eventful day
 When all the world shall be engulfed in flame—
 Had not the mattock's abrupt resurrection
 You brought to light and critical inspection?

Say, did you find existence long and dreary,
 Or was it all a long and happy dream?
 How could you live there? is the solemn query,
 And to some ears a fable it will seem.
 Let them indulge their strictures; but I deem
 Your sage experience tells another tale;
 Tell them the years since you have stemmed the stream
 And blent your croaking with the evening gale!
 I fancy you are not inclined to lecture,
 So I must rest content with bold conjecture.

TWINE THE GAY ROSE.

I sat in my bower as the warm day was closing;
 The bonnie young moon was just coming to view;
 The bird in its nest by my side was reposing;
 The lamb laid its head on the breast of the ewe;
 The brier shed its fragrance to charm the wee gowan;
 The bee sung its hymn in the bloom of the bean;
 The first drops of dew were refreshing the rowan
 That hung o'er the brae with its purple and green,
 When sweetly, oh, sweetly, a voice to me spoke:
 "Twine the gay rose with the young royal oak."

Grows the green bud where the water is flowing;
The deer lays its side on the bell of the brake;
The swallow returns where the high sun is glowing;
The swan seeks its rest in the reeds of the lake;
The worldling has lock'd up his heart with his treasure;
The infant's delight is its mother's fond knee,
I wonder'd when all had their own special pleasure,
What would in the wide world be coming to me,
When sweetly, oh sweetly, a voice to me spoke:
"Twine the gay rose with the young royal oak."



ALEXANDER SMITH.

Alexander Smith, one of the brightest gems in the literary crown of Ayrshire, was born in Douglas Street, Kilmarnock, on the last day of the year 1829. From his mother, whose maiden name was Helen Murray and who was of Highland descent, Alexander derived the strong Celtic taint that afterwards marked him a chosen votary of the muse. When the lad was about four years of age his connection with Ayrshire ceased, his father, who was a pattern designer, finding it convenient to remove with his family to Paisley. While here the first great shadow fell on the domestic circle by the death of Alexander's little sister, he, too, falling a prey to the disease which carried her off. Fortunately, he survived the affliction, and after gaining strength was able to continue his studies of reading and writing. In course of time the family removed to Glasgow, and when about twelve years of age Alexander made his debut in the commercial world by entering the designing-room in one of the city warehouses. The close application weighed heavily on the young lad's spirit, still he found time morning and evening for the study of literature, and before he had reached his seventeenth year he was familiar with the poetical writings of the most renowned British authors, and had himself essayed one or two rambling excursions into the flowery fields of Poesy. About this time he joined the Addisonian Literary and Debating Society, of which he was a member for seven years. Although he had written a good deal of verse before his 21st year, it was not till then he ventured to appear in print, his first piece being a poem, entitled "To a Friend," which was published in the "Glasgow Citizen," under the pen name of "Smith Murray." Other pieces followed, and were well received, and, in 1851, he forwarded a parcel of manuscript to Mr George Gilfillan, of Dundee, who was then at the height of his fame as a literary critic, and whose opinion was frequently asked by youthful aspirants. Mr Gilfillan at once formed a high opinion of the

pieces, and hesitated not to proclaim Alexander Smith a true son of genius, and himself the enthusiastic discoverer of a new star in the poetic firmament. This Mr Gilfillan accomplished by writing articles in the "Eclectic Review" and "The Critic," submitting extracts from Smith's poems, and in this way the young author was brought under favourable notice, and subsequently made the acquaintance of such literary giants as Hugh Macdonald and Professor Nichol.

Thus encouraged our poet settled down to work on his first long poem, "A Life Drama," working frequently at it far into the hours of departing night, and rising early in the mornings, till at length in 1852 the volume was published by Bogue, of London, who paid £100 for the copyright. The work achieved sudden fame, and thousands of copies were sold in the British Isles, appreciative notices appearing in several American and Australian papers. The result of all this was that our poet for a time abandoned pattern designing and resolved on having a holiday. In company with his friend, John Nichol, he set out for London, and, passing through the Lake Country, visited Miss Martineau, and afterwards, at Nottingham, made the acquaintance of Philip Bailey, the author of "Festus." In London he was everywhere taken by the hand, and his holiday had the effect of stimulating and encouraging him in the entrancing paths of literature.

Returning to Scotland, he spent a week at Inveraray Castle as the guest of the Duke of Argyll, being there introduced to Lord Dufferin. Thereafter he bade farewell for a time to "trailing showers and breezy downs" and settled down to acquaint himself more fully with "the tragic hearts of towns." Turning his attention wholly to literary work, he edited for a time "The Glasgow Miscellany," but this periodical had a brief existence, and it now became necessary to find a fresh field of labour. Through the influence of a few friends and in recognition of his literary talents, he was appointed secretary to the University of Edinburgh, and in 1854 removed from the "sea-born city," and took over the responsibilities of his new position. The salary was only £150 per annum, but the work, excepting at stated intervals, left him time in the evenings for literary exercise. To this post was added some few years afterwards the appointment of Registrar to the University Council, by which he gained an additional £40 to his emoluments.

In the new sphere of his labours Alexander Smith soon came into touch with the literati and others moving in art circles, and became the central figure of a select coterie known as "The Raleigh Club." About this time he made the acquaintance of Sydney Dobell, in co-operation with whom an interesting volume was produced, consisting of a selection of

songs and sonnets on topics dealing with the war in Crimea. The year 1857 saw the publication of "City Poems," by Messrs Macmillan, who paid £200 for the book.

Alexander Smith had now reached the zenith of his fame, and planted his standard on one of the highest peaks of Parnassus. Thenceforward his course—as a writer of poems—was a downward one. Not so, however, his career as a prose writer, for in 1863 "Dreamthorp" appeared, and at once took readers by storm, placing our author in a foremost place among writers of English prose.

In the spring of 1857 the poet married Miss Flora Macdonald, a descendant of the heroine of Scottish romance and a native of Ord, in Skye, and shortly afterwards removed to Wardie, on the seashore, where he resided until his death in 1867.

On the publication of "City Poems" certain critics raised an altogether unwarrantable charge of plagiarism against the author, which greatly damaged his poetical reputation, so much so that when "Edwin of Deira," an historical poem, was published in 1861 the whole pecuniary benefit he derived from it was £15 5s 3d. His best known and most popular work, "A Summer in Skye," was issued in 1865, and is reminiscent of holidays spent by the author in the island of misty peaks. About this same time he edited the "Poetical Works of Burns" for Macmillan's Globe Edition, contributing an admirable memoir. His first and only novel, "Alfred Hagart's Household," appeared in serial form in "Good Words," and was republished in book form in 1866.

About this time his health began to show symptoms of breaking down, and in the following year, on returning from a holiday spent in the neighbourhood of Dingwall, he was laid down by typhoid, under which he sank on the 5th of January, 1867. A Runic cross marks the spot where his remains lie in Warriston Cemetery.

TWO SONNETS.

I.

Beauty still walketh on the earth and air;
 Our present sunsets are as rich in gold
 As e'er the Iliad's music was out rolled;
 The roses of the Spring are ever fair
 'Mong branches green still ring-doves coo and pair,
 And the deep sea still foams its music old.
 So, if we are at all divinely souled,
 This beauty will unloose our bonds of care.
 'Tis pleasant when blue skies are o'er us bending
 Within old starry-gated Poesy,

To meet a soul set to no worldly tune,
 Like thine, sweet Friend! Oh, dearer this to me
 Than are the dewy trees, the sun, the moon,
 Or noble music with a golden ending.

II.

Last night my cheek was wetted with warm tears,
 Each worth a world. They fell from eyes divine.
 Last night a loving lip was pressed to mine,
 And at its touch fled all the barren years.
 And softly couched upon a bosom white,
 Which came and went beneath me like a sea,
 As emperor I lay in empire bright,
 Lord of the beating heart, while tenderly
 Love-words were glutting my love-greedy ears.
 Kind Love, I thank thee for that happy night!
 Richer this cheek with those warm tears of thine
 Than the vast midnight with its gleaming spheres,
 Leander toiling through the moonlight brine,
 Kingdomless Anthony, were scarce my peers.

EXTRACT FROM "A LIFE DRAMA."

Scene IX.—A Lawn—Sunset—Walter lying at Violet's Feet.

VIOLET.

You loved, then, very much this friend of thine?

WALTER.

The sound of his voice did warm my heart like wine.
 He's long since dead; but if there is a heaven
 He's in its heart of bliss.

VIOLET.

How did you live?

WALTER.

We read and wrote together, slept together;
 We dwelt on slopes against the morning sun,
 We dwelt in crowded street, and loved to walk
 While Labour slept, for, in the ghastly dawn,
 The wildered city seemed a demon's brain,
 The children of the night its evil thoughts.
 Sometimes we sat whole afternoons, and watched
 The sunset build a city frail as a dream,
 With bridges, streets of splendour, towers; and saw
 The fabrics crumble into rosy ruins,
 And then grow grey as heath. But our chief joy
 Was to draw images from everything;
 And images lay thick upon our talk
 As shells on ocean sands.

VIOLET.

From everything!

Here is the sunset, yonder grows the moon.
What image would you draw from these?

WALTER.

Why, this:

The sun is dying like a cloven king
In his own blood; the while the distant moon,
Like a pale prophetess, whom he has wronged,
Leans eager forward, with most hungry eyes,
Watching him bleed to death, and, as he faints,
She brightens and dilates; revenge complete,
She walks in lonely triumph through the night.

VIOLET.

Give not such hateful passion to the orb
That cools the heated lands; that ripens the fields,
While sleep the husbandmen, then hastes away
Ere the first step of dawn, doing all good
In secret and the night. 'Tis very wrong.
Would I had known your friend!

WALTER.

Iconoclast!

'Tis better as it is.

VIOLET.

Why is it so?

WALTER.

Because you would have loved him, and then I
Would have to wander outside of all joy
Like Neptune in the cold.

[A pause.]

VIOLET.

Do you remember

You promised yesterday you'd paint for me
Three pictures from your life?

WALTER.

I'll do so now.

On this delicious eve, with words like colours
I'll limn them on the canvas of your sense.

VIOLET.

Be quick! be quick! for see, the parting sun
But peers above yon range of crimson hills,
Taking his last look of this lovely scene,
Dusk will be here anon.

WALTER.

And all the stars!

VIOLET.

Great friends of yours ; you love them over much.

WALTER.

I love the stars too much ! The tameless sea
 Spreads itself out beneath them, smooth as glass.
 You cannot love them, lady, till you dwell
 In mighty towns ; immured in their black hearts,
 The stars are nearer to you than the fields.
 I'd grow an Atheist in these towns of trade
 Wer't not for stars. The smoke puts heaven out :
 I meet sin-bloated faces in the streets,
 And shrink as from a blow. I hear wild oaths,
 And curses spilt from lips that once were sweet,
 And sealed for Heaven by a mother's kiss.
 I mix with men whose hearts of human flesh,
 Beneath the petrifying touch of gold,
 Have grown as stony as the trodden ways.
 I see no trace of God till in the night,
 While the vast city lies in dreams of gain,
 He doth reveal Himself to me in Heaven.
 My heart swells to Him as the sea to the moon ;
 Therefore it is I love the midnight stars.

VIOLET.

I would I had a lover who could give
 Such ample reasons for his loving me,
 As you for loving stars ! But to your task.

GLASGOW.

Sing, Poet, 'tis a merry world ;
 That cottage smoke is rolled and curled
 In sport, that every moss
 Is happy, every inch of soil :
 Before me runs a road of toil
 With my grave cut across.
 Sing, trailing showers and breezy downs—
 I know the tragic hearts of towns.

City ! I am true son of thine ;
 Ne'er dwelt I where great mornings shine
 Around the bleating pens ;
 Ne'er by the rivulets I strayed,
 And ne'er upon my childhood weighed
 The silence of the glens.
 Instead of shores where ocean beats,
 I hear the ebb and flow of streets.

Black Labour draws his weary waves
 Into their secret-moaning caves ;
 But with the morning light,
 That sea again will overflow

With a long weary sound of woe,
 Again to faint in night.
 Wave, am I in that sea of woes
 Which, night and morning, ebbs and flows?

I dwelt within a gloomy court,
 Wherein did never sunbeam sport;
 Yet there my heart was stirr'd—
 My very blood did dance and thrill,
 When on my narrow window-sill
 Spring lighted like a bird.
 Poor flowers—I watched them pine for weeks,
 With leaves as pale as human cheeks.

Afar, one summer, I was borne,
 Through golden vapours of the morn,
 I heard the hills of sheep;
 I trod with a wild ecstasy
 The bright fringe of the living sea;
 And on a ruined keep
 I sat, and watched an endless plain
 Blacken beneath the gloom of rain.

O fair the lightly sprinkled waste
 O'er which a laughing shower has raced!
 O fair the April shoots;
 O fair the woods on summer days
 While a blue hyacinthine haze
 Is dreaming round the roots!
 In thee, O City! I discern
 Another beauty, sad and stern.

Draw thy fierce streams of blinding ore,
 Smite on a thousand anvils, roar
 Down to the harbour-bars;
 Smoulder in smoky sunsets, flare
 On rainy nights, while street and square
 Lie empty to the stars.
 From terrace proud to alley base
 I know thee as my mother's face.

When sunset bathes thee in his gold,
 In wreaths of bronze thy sides are rolled,
 Thy smoke is dusky fire;
 And from the glory round thee poured
 A sunbeam like an angel's sword
 Shivers upon a spire.
 Thus have I watched thee. Terror! Dream!
 While the blue Night crept up the stream.

The wild Train plunges in the hills,
 He shrieks across the midnight rills;
 Streams thro' the shifting glare
 The roar and flap of foundry fires,
 That shake with light the sleeping shires;
 And on the moorlands bare,
 He sees afar a crown of light
 Hang o'er thee in the hollow night.

At midnight when thy suburbs lie
 As silent as a noon-day sky,
 When larks with heat are mute,
 I love to linger on thy bridge,
 All lonely as a mountain ridge,
 Disturbed but by my foot!
 While the black, lazy stream beneath
 Steals from its far-off wilds of heath.

And through thy heart as through a dream
 Flows on that black disdainful stream;
 All scornfully it flows,
 Between the huddled gloom of masts,
 Silent as pines unvexed by blasts—
 'Tween lamps in streaming rows.
 O wondrous sight! O stream of dread!
 O long, dark river of the dead!

Afar, the banner of the year
 Unfurls; but dimly prisoned here,
 'Tis only when I greet
 A dropt rose lying in my way,
 A butterfly that flutters gay
 Athwart the noisy street,
 I know the happy summer smiles
 Around thy suburbs, miles on miles.

'Tween neither pæan now, nor dirge,
 The flash and thunder of the surge
 On flat sands wide and bare;
 No haunting joy of anguish dwells
 In the green light of sunny dells,
 Or in the starry air.
 Alike to me the desert flower,
 The rainbow laughing o'er the shower.

While o'er thy walls the darkness sails,
 I lean against the churchyard rails;
 Up in the midnight towers
 The belfried spire, the street is dead,
 I hear in silence overhead
 The clang of iron hours;
 It moves me not—I know her tomb
 Is yonder in the shapeless gloom.

All raptures of this mortal breath,
 Solemnities of life and death,
 Dwell in thy noise alone;
 Of me thou hast become a part—
 Some kindred with my human heart
 Lives in thy streets of stone!
 For we have been familiar more
 Than galley-slave and weary oar.

The beech is dipped in wine; the shower
 Is burnished; on the swinging flower
 The latest bee doth sit.
 The low sun stares through dust of gold,

And o'er the darkening heath and wold
 The large ghost-moth doth flit.
 In every orchard Autumn stands,
 With apples in his golden hands.

But all these sights and sounds are strange;
 Then wherefore from thee should I range?
 Thou hast my kith and kin;
 My childhood, youth, and manhood brave;
 Thou hast that unforgotten grave
 Within thy central din.
 A sacredness of love and death
 Dwells in thy noise and smoky breath.

* *

WILLIAM SHIELDS, M.D.

William Shields was a follower of Æsculapius, and was gifted with a waft of the divine afflatus. He was born in Kilmarnock, where he studied medicine before graduating at the University of Glasgow. Having qualified as a medical practitioner, he made a voyage to the Arctic Seas as surgeon on board a whaling vessel, and on returning home was engaged as assistant practitioner to several of the medical profession, eventually settling in Irvine, where he established a good practice, and entered with much energy into every scheme that was promoted for the benefit of the community. Doctor Shields did not attempt the composition of any very ambitious poetical effusions, and was more successful with simple lyrics and humorous trifles than with weightier pieces.

* *

HUGH CLARK.

The pathetic history of Hugh Clark, known to a small literary circle as "Heone," presents a spectacle from which we turn away with a heavy heart. That he is a born poet—a person of genius as contrasted with talent—there is no denying. Hugh Clark was born at a farmhouse in the parish of Ardrossan, and started work as a farm-boy, but afterwards engaged as assistant to his brother, who was a merchant in Saltcoats. After being employed for a time in Saltcoats and Ardrossan, he longed to try his fortune in the great commercial maelstrom of the West, and at the age of sixteen began to work as a clerk in one of the counting-houses of Glasgow. To a person of his age and temperament this step was fraught with dangers of

the most momentous kind, and a result, which is all too common, followed his unwise choice of a city rather than a country life. Unable to withstand the temptations of the great city, he gradually but surely fell into dissipated habits, and was forced to relinquish situation after situation, till he was left stranded on the tide of commerce, a hopeless social wreck.

Hugh Clark in early manhood was gifted with a fine presence and address, to which was added a richly imaginative poetic fancy. In later years his mind became more or less clouded.

“And here the rural Muse might aptly say
 As sober evening sweetly siles along,
 How once she chased black ignorance away
 And warmed his artless song with feelings strong
 To teach his reed to warble forth a song;
 And how it echoed on the evening gale
 All by the brook the pasture flow’rs among!
 But ah! what do such trifles now avail?
 There’s few to notice him, or hear his simple tale.”

THE SPIRIT OF LOVE.

Spirit of Love, O wave thy lofty wings,
 And waft me to that clime serene and fair
 Where no base thought clouds the celestial air,
 Nor false fruits tempt, nor breathe unhallow’d things,
 But joy for ever soars, and soars and sings!
 Lift, lift me out this miserable lair!
 Pluck from my heart the scorpions nestling there,
 Whose venom-dart my inmost being stings
 To agony unspeakable! O cleave
 From these poor bleeding hands so weak and slender
 The self-bound fetters sin and folly weave!
 From foes without that loudly call “Surrender!”
 And fears within that would my soul deceive,
 Save me! Spirit of Love, Thou true and tender!

PAN’S DREAM.

From “Echoes from our Olympus.”

Veiled in the aery woof the sunlight weaves
 Fair Venus rose out of the sapphire sea;
 And, light as dew-fall on the violet leaves,
 With rosy footsteps stole along the lea.

Love led her on, in purple pinions plumed;
 A troop of smiling graces followed after;
 The flower buds, deeming it was summer, bloom’d
 As they passed by with songs and silvery laughter.

Vanishing, like sunset, in a wood! Here
Hiding in the stilly forest's deep, green gloom,
A pool, like liquid diamond, cold and clear,
Lay blossom'd o'er with lotus-lily bloom.

Uprose its guardian Naiad, singing clear,
"Let lovely Venus say what her sweet will is?"
Replied Love's Queen:—"Sire Neptune sent us here
To beg a bouquet of your virgin lilies."

Soon forth they issued, ocean-ward returning,
Each nymph a sheaf of full-blown blossoms bringing;
So soft and snowy pure, 'twere hard discerning
The lilies from the white arms round them clinging!

Upon the beach Old Neptune, wet and flowing,
Received Queen Venus and her laden train,
Well pleased, on her coy cheek a kiss bestowing;
Then to his Emerald Halls they sped amain,
In pink and azure pearly scallops rowing,
By Syren led, on ruddy sea-shells, bugles blowing.

ARDROSSAN: A RETROSPECT.

From poem entitled "An Excursion from the City to the Sea."

In a cottage I was cradled by the margin of the sea,
And my feather-footed boyhood, sped the silver-sanded shore;
Ah, the broom in golden blossoms and the daisy-jewelled lea,
I remember, I remember, tho' I see them never more.

'Mid the dim and solemn shadows, by my faintly glowing fire,
I sit and wake the memories of those golden days of yore;
And my fancy in the embers rears a well-known church and spire
By a hill with storied column and a castle high and hoar.

And I see the loud-lipped cannon and the grey time-hallowed
tombs,
Where the kine are calmly browsing, and the light-limbed lambkin
skips,
Far below them lies a Crescent dropt in odour-breathing blooms
And a red town clasping in her arms a forest dim of ships.

Dark looming in the distance tower proud Arran's purple tops,
With the Holy Island lying like an emerald in the lea;
O, the glory and the gloom of gulfy glens and sunny slopes,
O'er the shimmer and the glimmer of the silver-glancing sea!

* * * * *

Hark! the wind howls at my lattice, and the swift-descending
snow
Is fluttering like a wounded dove against my window pane;
Yes! 'tis winter, and I only dream of summers long ago;
Yet methinks I hear the music of the melancholy main.

ION.

A Mid-Summer Day's Dream.

A kinglier form did ne'er ascend a throne;
 A kindlier hand came never from above;
 Heart-conqueror of the world he walks alone,
 The living Hero of the dreams of Love.

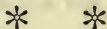
Rose-orb crown'd Emperor of the eye and ear
 He stands a statue—moves a victor-King;
 He stands and Nature holds her breath to hear—
 He sings as none except a god can sing.

The incarnate pageant-glory of his tread
 Imagination domes with triumph-towers;
 Before him, Strength bows down his haughty head;
 Beneath his proud feet Beauty scatters flowers.

Nobly achieving duties high and low,
 The zone-height of his soul is still to pray,
 To turn to joy this wailing world of woe—
 As Heaven's blest sun turns Darkness into Day!

Through the wide flashing of his deep soul-spheres
 Streams the far glimmer of a coming light,
 As from his exile of six thousand years,
 A star sings t'ward his long-lost brethren bright.

The lion and the lamb are linked in him!
 Love is the light that doth his soul illumine!
 And, like the soft flame in a lanthorn dim,
 Glows through his frame the clear celestial bloom!



RICHARD TARBET.

Richard Tarbet, who laboured for the long period of fifty-five years as a schoolmaster in Darvel, claims notice in these pages as a local historian as well as a poet. On retiring from his long term of active services as a teacher, his worth and ability were duly recognised by old pupils and other friends, who presented him with a handsome illuminated address. Mr Tarbet is an intense lover of Nature, with a strong bias for geological and botanical pursuits. He is the author of numerous articles on historical and scientific subjects.

LORD KELVIN.

Died at Netherhall, Largs, 17th December, 1907.

Wail, Science, your most noble son!
 Wail, Scientists, your honoured chief!
 Wail, Britons all, your dearest kin!
 Wail, ye who wear a kingly crown,
 All ye who roam the treacherous sea,
 Or ye who kindle light and heat,
 All ye who talk beneath the deep!
 Wail, Western and most Eastern lands!
 The Nestor of our time who taught
 The secrets of electric power
 Is dead!
 Bow low the head!
 All sorrow cease!
 The great Lord Kelvin sleeps in peace!

(Interred Westminster Abbey, 23rd December, 1907.)

O'er all the world the tale is told,
 The passing of the mighty dead;
 And all the aristoi of the earth
 Of noble or ignoble birth,
 Acclaim his fame
 And praise his name,
 And join with universal zeal
 In an unanimous appeal
 That he in Britain's shrine in state
 Be laid to rest among the great
 Who helped to make us what we are,
 And was himself a guiding star.

* * * * *

While sadness reigns in Netherhall
 And gloom o'er Gilmorehill,
 His mortal form is borne afar
 In grief and silence still.

* * * * *

Tolled in the noontide's mournful bell,
 Chiming a chant that "all is well;"
 The long procession bearing palls:
 On all a solemn silence falls,
 While burial rites and prayers they sing,
 And anthems through the arches ring,
 They yield to earth her Science King.
 Bow low the head!
 All sorrow cease!
 The great Lord Kelvin sleeps in peace!

DAVID LINDSAY.

David Lindsay was born in Kilmarnock, where he was apprenticed to the trade of block printing, but after serving four years he relinquished the work, and crossing over to the Emerald Isle, joined the Irish Constabulary, and rose to the position of commanding officer. He also held the appointment of ship inspector, an office which he continued to hold after his retiral from the constabulary in 1880. He contributed prose sketches and poems to various newspapers and magazines, and which are proof of considerable literary power.

AUTUMN REFLECTIONS.

The pathways thick are strewn with brownéd leaves,
 And bright autumnal skies emblend with grey;
 The reapers toil amid the golden sheaves;
 Slow drags the clattering team along the way.
 I linger, and with glist'ning eye survey
 The stubble plains that now are swept so bare,
 Feeling as if subliming sorrow lay
 O'er all I see—some shadowed reflex there
 Of Man! emblem of changing seasons ev'rywhere.

Sear-leaved decline does o'er the woodlands steal,
 The faded flow'rs lie with'ring at my feet,
 Their robes of beauty gone; no charms reveal
 By bank or field-path, or by hedge-row sweet;
 No vernal perfume scents the lone retreat,
 The summer's shimmer from the fields has fled;
 Nature awaits the hours that shall complete
 The lasting year—with sympathy I tread
 The wreaths of fallen grass that greenless are and dead.

The autumn lingers, but how sadd'ningly
 The earth appears pall'd o'er by wan decay;
 Yet in that sadness immortality
 Is whispered, and the living seem to say—
 "Spring shall again return—each leafless spray
 Shall wave in Nature's sheen of summer dress,
 For winter's surly storms shall pass away,
 And the warm zephyrs shall again caress
 The flow'rs that wait her smile to bloom in loveliness!"

The landscape's sparsely dotted still with gold,
 Not flashing now, though still in glory drest,
 The ferns have rusted like the iron when old,
 And russet is the beech by stern behest;

The mountain ash, like sunset in the west,
 With clust'ring scarlet berries all aglow,
 Deep is the quietude bespeaking rest—
 There's grandeur in each paling tint; but, lo!
 Deep in my heart a sadness I but too well know.

The birds, preparatory to their flight,
 Make noisy circuits round the old church vane,
 Or swiftly dart through air and then alight,
 And will not with us longer now remain;
 But leave for warmer latitudes again.
 The thrush and blackbird silent long have been,
 The redbreast's notes but speak of dark'ning rain,
 The lark at intervals is heard, I ween,
 But migrate visitants no longer now are seen.

The flocks of fleecy clouds move surely past,
 And from beneath each shade a glinting ray
 Flickers an instant, and its beam doth cast
 On field and woods along through which I stray,
 Causing alternate gleam and gloom to play
 On the glad colours waving I behold!
 The tinges deepen as I turn away
 From erst rich garniture of vale and wold
 That Cornucopia's stores profusely now unfold.

The amber sunset tops the distant wood
 That forms a compact bank against this light,
 The restless rooks return in clam'rous mood
 From foraging, and settle for the night;
 The rising moon peeps over yonder height
 Of stilled trees that throw their dark shades deep
 Across the stream unruffled. All is quiet,
 Save drooping leaves and chestnut fronds that keep
 Falling at intervals, and waken birds from sleep.

The years move round, familiar to us all,
 By slow gradations, scarce we note each change;
 The evening shadows swiftly round us fall,
 The days grow short, and on yon mountain range
 The crisp white snow we see, nor think it strange
 The lighted eves should us again invite
 To social joys within the homely grange,
 Where pleasant tales beguile the winter's night
 And pure domestic comforts minister delight.

Man has his seasons. Spring-tide paths ope fair,
 And dazzling hope bespells the youthful mind.
 Enchantment! Ah! how exquisitely rare!
 His summer comes and yet deceived may find
 Him led by thoughts ambitious and inclined
 To crest that hill on which so few shall stand!
 His autumn finds all false and more unkind—
 Dimm'd eyes, blanched hair: the winter's icy hand,
 Sequence of all, bids death lead to the unseen land.

REV. JAMES BALLANTINE.

It is a relief sometimes to consult the pages of a spiritual poet who can strike the major as well as the minor mode, and produce something better than "plebeian pathos." James Ballantine, who was born in Irvine, gives evidence in his book of poems that he could tune his lyre to variant moods and measures. After receiving a rudimentary schooling at Irvine Academy, Mr Ballantine engaged as an assistant teacher in Glasgow, attending at the same time the University classes. His health breaking down, he was compelled to seek a more salubrious climate, and in 1861 he emigrated to Jamaica. Soon after arriving there he was appointed missionary of the United Presbyterian Church, a charge which he held for about twelve years, at the end of which period he transferred his services to Canada, settling in Canada West as a Presbyterian minister. After a time he demitted this charge and returned to Jamaica, engaging in missionary work at Hampden.

Mr Ballantine's poems are pervaded with a patriotic love for the scenes of homeland and the hallowed memories which cling to almost every footbreadth of his native country.

A VOICE FROM THE MOORS.

They say the fire is low to-day that burned so high of old,
And that the Martyrs died in vain, on mountain, moor, and wold:
They say that harps thro' Scotland ring, that charm while they
betray,

And that her proudest memories are fading fast away.
They say her Covenanting page now reads like any story,
And that a thousand Hun-like hands are on her ark of glory.
And is the land no more that won my heart in life's spring day,—
The land that on its crest of yore caught Truth's eternal ray?
My Country! can I then no more thine ancient honour trust
And must I see thee creep through Time discrown'd and in the
dust?

I reckon not of the patriot harps that wake to charm thee there;
The rose of Freedom pines away in Truth's dishevelled hair.

They say that Scotsmen feed the moth with the banner of their
sires,

And that the wind is gone that fanned the old heroic fires:
They say that high-souled genius spurns the peasant's simple creed,
And brands him fool that poured his blood in Scotland's darkest
need.

But no! I dream—it cannot be—ye dreadful spells away!
I see a light on the moorland yet and a crown on the mountain grey.
I see the dear old land of youth—once more I call it mine:
I see a thousand cataracts adown its gorges shine:

No grave is gone from moor or glen, no memory from the hill:
 I yet may burn on bleak Airmoss, and still at Bothwell thrill;
 I yet may muse o'er many a linn, and weep in many a cave,
 And still in pride may roam the land where heath and thistle wave.

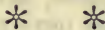
Ye worldlings, hush your scornful harps—I know their guilty
 times;

But who are ye that dare to point a finger at their crimes?
 Have ye in fancy's soaring dream their high ideal reached—
 Their thought that burning bright became a voice in blood that
 preached?

Have ye e'er sealed that starry night to look with them abroad
 And see a nation kneeling round the footstool of its God?
 Ye sing the glorious march of mind and haste it to your goal,
 Like a meteor shot through the dark of time, far, far from
 Heaven's pole;

Ye fill the thrones of fame with men whose garments drip with
 blood,

But never ask whence Zion came careering o'er the flood,
 Go, see the buried truth up start in glory from the glen:
 The King Eternal claims a throne among the sons of men.



ALEXANDER WATSON.

Nature has appointed a place in the woodland groves for
 the humblest as well as the most exalted warbler.

“The tender lark will find a time to fly,
 And fearful hare to run a quiet race;
 He that high growth on cedars did bestow
 Gave also lowly mushrooms leave to grow.”

Alexander Watson, who was born in the parish of Steven-
 ston, is one of the lowly tribe of lyric warblers. Some of his
 lyrical pieces were set to music by Mr Hamilton Nimmo, one of
 the best-known being “Good-Night, Comrades All.” Mr
 Watson had the artistic as well as the poetic gift, and expressed
 his feelings as freely with the aid of the pencil as the pen.

GOOD-NIGHT, COMRADES ALL.

Good-night, comrades all, good-night,
 Drill is o'er and hearts are light;
 Homeward now with merry stride—
 Haste, haste we to the old fireside.
 Hallowed home, oh, Scotia dear,
 Nought hast thou from foes to fear;
 Heaven defends the true and right,
 Good-night, comrades all, good-night,
 Good-night, comrades all, good-night.

Good-night, comrades, we shall be
 True to Queen and Liberty—
 True to these old heath-clad hills
 Deep furrowed by a thousand rills.
 Defence and not Defiance be
 Our motto; let the nations see
 That British hearts link right with might.
 Good-night, comrades all, good-night,
 Good-night, comrades all, good-night.



JOHN STEELE.

The township of Kilbirnie has been noted for its minstrels since Thomas MacQueen waked the harp which for so many years hung silent on the cottage halls of Glen Garnock. Although none of the Kilbirnie bards has reached the poetical altitudes attained by MacQueen, several of them have composed verses of average good quality, and among them is Mr John Steele, who, although he left Kilbirnie upwards of twenty-five years ago, is still remembered by many of the older inhabitants of the town. Mr Steele is presently engaged as foreman in a large linen thread mill in New York State, America. He has kindly forwarded one or two of his musings, from which we select the following as a fair sample of his poetical composition:—

BE A MAN.

Why lies the aching head so low—
 Why dim the eye was wont to glow—
 Why palsied shakes with trembling throe
 The nervous hand?
 And why, oh, why reels to and fro
 God's image grand?

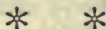
When first I met thee fair and young,
 With truth and virtue on thy tongue,
 While sterling worth around thee hung,
 By thee was graced;
 At human faults thy heart-strings rung
 Nor frailties traced.

Then on thy manly, youthful heart
 High hopes and aims impatient start,
 While quick as thought through every part
 Expedient ready;
 Ambition soared o'er human art
 To heights unsteady.

'Twas this that brought thee to the dust—
 For this thy noblest efforts rust—
 The bacchanalian fiend accurst
 Has dragged thee down.
 Both to thyself and God unjust,
 How wretched grown.

Rise, rise, and fling the cup away,
 Look on yon sun and this fair day,
 And resolute ascend the brae
 Of independence;
 No longer under Bacchus' sway
 Dance thou attendance.

Arise, assert thy manhood's right,
 Gird thy resolves with reason's light,
 Smooth gliding down at last to-night
 Life's battle o'er
 Will find thee free from every blight
 For evermore.



CRAWFORD STIRRAT ALLAN.

Every being so endowed—says the philosopher—will find his fitting vocation. Crawford Stirrat Allan, who is a native of Dalry, began to search for a fitting vocation when a mere lad, first as a shoemaker's apprentice, and afterwards as a votary of one of the building trades, finding eventually as a successful business man in Wigan the true sphere of his labours. Several booklets of Mr Allan's verse have been issued from the press, more for private circulation than with any view on the part of the author to catering for public applause, as his innate modesty debars him from claiming any outstanding merit in the outpourings of his muse.

Mr Allan might very appropriately adopt as his motto the following words:—

“Have little care that life is brief,
 And less that art is long!
 Success is in the silences,
 Though FAME is in the song.”

M. W. PEACE.

'Twas on a bleak, November day,
 The fleece upon our pathway lay,
 And all around was still and drear,
 When Brother Peace lay on his bier.

He meant to join an outbound ship
That sailed from Britain's shore,
Hopeful his contemplated trip
Would his lost health restore.

But as the day wore slowly on
And eventide drew nigh,
A radiant light around him shone—
The Angel Death stood by.

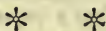
And now his earthly race is o'er,
The battle's fought and won;
Now landed safe on Canaan's shore,
He hears with joy, "Well done!"

That empty shell, that tongue once deft,
No duty now perform;
Most noble sire: 'tis all that's left
Of that once manly form.

Yet, once that active brain did move
Aye foremost in the fight;
A heart that ever flowed with love,
Pulsating for the right.

His body moulders in the dust
Beneath the cold, green sod;
His spirit rests in solemn trust
With his Almighty God.

Away dull sceptics—sons of Night,
Who dare to doubt the plan,
That Christ, the Son of God—our Light—
Was slain for fallen man!



REV. THOMAS DUNLOP.

Thomas Dunlop, author of a handsome volume entitled "John Tamson's Bairns and Other Poems," was born at Kilmarnock, and was the only brother of the late Mr George Dunlop, editor of the "Kilmarnock Standard." He studied for the ministry, his first pastorate charge being that of the United Presbyterian Church, Balfour. Subsequently he was appointed co-pastor with Dr Peddie of the Bristo congregation, Edinburgh, but after a time severed his connection with this church, and accepted a call to the Emmanuel Congregational Church of Bootle, near Birkenhead, where he continued to labour till near the close of his life. His poems are as varied in style as in the choice of subjects, some of his happiest efforts being written in the homely vernacular of his native country.

DR JOHN BROWN,

Author of "Rab and his Friends."

No shining morn but hastens to its ending,
 Nor sparkling dew but seeks too soon the sky!
 Half unperceived upon our steps attending
 The wise men hurry on and pass us by;
 We know not what the good are till they die,
 Nor know the prophet-soul whom God is sending,
 Till like the sailor's bride in tears upon the shore,
 Waving her last adieu, we see him nevermore.

Brightest of all the goodly race before him,
 Of all his worthy sires most worthy he;
 Whom Genius loved, and cast her mantle o'er him,
 Whom from a child Faith nurtured on her knee.
 Pure Wisdom, Wit, and (richest of the three)
 Kind Humour, everywhere deplore him—
 Gentle, devout John Brown, droll wizard of the pen,
 The son of Mirth and Tears, the friend of dogs and men!

* * * * *

He walked life's way like shadow softly stealing,
 With the glad Muses ever hovering by,
 The shyest of their secret things revealing,
 Whilst he, their loved interpreter, was nigh—
 With mystic pen and seer's far-piercing eye,
 Deep in his heart the subtle craft concealing
 Of serving sacred Truth with Fancy's drollest wiles,
 Melting the soul to tears, and turning these to smiles.

O rare old man! to whom so much beholden,
 Our hearts refuse to rank thee with the dead;
 Still break the truth, the beautiful, the golden,
 And when thou speakest, naught else need be said!
 Not one bright beam of thy dear face hath fled,
 Nor will have fled when these, our times, are olden—
 Homely and sober face, benevolent and sage,
 Comely and silver-crowned with three times honoured age.

TODDLIN' TAMMIE.

Twa-year-auld wee toddlin' Tammie,
 Fu' o' daffin, fu' o' din;
 Winsomer wee sonsie lambie;
 Brawer bairn to his ain mammie
 Never thrive in halesome skin.

Dainty chiel! thy faither's crony!
 Pure thy breast, and sorrow free;
 His, alas! grown hard and stony!
 Scant o' sense (if he has ony),
 Aye a sprinklin' o't in thee.

* * * * *

Wee bit sturdy, stacherin' chappie,
 Gleg wee man as e'er was seen,
 Ken ye why the big saut drappie,
 No' ill spent, nor yet unhappy,
 Fa's doun frae yer faither's een?

Thy wee roun' cheek; saft and callow
 Thy wee pow o' sunny hair;
 His is gettin' grey, puir fallow!
 And his face grows thin and fallow
 Wi' the bitter clytes o' care.

Shall he ever live to see thee
 Hale and strong on life's brae-tap,
 Glad in a' the warl' can gi'e thee—
 Or in wae misfortune dree thee
 To the grave, thy mither's lap?

Speak nae mair the word o' sorrow!
 Bring nae mair the feckless tear!
 Foolish wark it is to borrow
 Frae the torn pouch o' To-morrow—
 God is guid—To-day is here!

My wee Tam, should ill befa' thee,
 Thole it weel till a' be dune;
 Slander's tongue may oft misca' thee;
 Pleasure's gilded toys withdraw thee
 Into slimy paths o' sin;

But the Shepherd, kind and tender,
 Aunce a wee bit lamb like thee,
 Kens fu' weel what help to render—
 A' the frail folks' ain Defender,
 Never Frien' sae staunch as He.

Soon will cease thy childish prattle;
 Soon to sterner things give place,
 Spinning top, and trump, and rattle—
 Gang thy gate and fight thy battle,
 Gird thee weel and win the race!

Here not long we bide thegither,
 But we a' shall gether there,
 Unco blithe wi' ane anither—
 Wee bairns wi' their faither—mither—
 In the lang, lang evermair.

A BIRTHDAY OFFERING.

If Love her best can yield when least is said,
 And be her kindest when thought is still,
 Earning her highest boon by mere sweet will,
 And thrive on trust as on her daily bread,
 Then would I like a rose whose leaves are shed,
 Some little space within the memory fill
 With balm, which never cankering care would kill,

A fragrance when the flower is long since dead;
 For other gift from me, alas! is none—
 With full heart only and with empty hands,
 Walking between thee and the evening sun
 Adown the misty way of Hope's waste lands,
 I greet thee, dearest soul of all that live,
 With Love's poor self when Love naught else can give!



DAVID RAESIDE.

David Raeside, who was born in the parish of Dunlop, was one who might have "waked to ecstasy the living lyre" had he not been cut off in the bloom of early manhood. Of a grave, thoughtful, and pious nature, his inclination lay towards the work of the ministry, and with this purpose in view he studied at the University of Glasgow until failing health compelled him to relinquish his studies. He subsequently retired to Paisley, where he died while yet in the prime of manhood. Mr Raeside cultivated poetry from his earliest student years, and continued so doing till near his end. About a year after his death a small memorial volume of his pieces was published, and these show that he was gifted with true poetic genius, being, evidently, the outpourings of a tender and compassionate heart—the heart of one who knew "the generous fellowship of joy, the sympathy of grief."

DAWN.

Stars hung like tear-drops in the eye of night
 In solemn gloom:
 The world lay awed beneath their mournful light,
 As voiceless as the tomb.

The forests stood like silent spirit bands
 On hill and dale,
 And in the darkness waved their outstretched hands,
 Moved by the gentle gale.

The din of trade, the city's tuneless voice
 Was hushed and dead;
 And Sleep had wreath'd mysterious dreamland joys
 Round many an aching head.

The world was still, as silent as a cloud
 That hangs in air;
 And heaven, with all her thousand tear-drops, bowed
 And wept, o'er human care.

When far away, where the blue folds of space
 Hang round the world;
 And the dim cloudlets on the mountain's face
 In shadowy wreaths are curled.

A slowly brightening blush illumed the air
 And grew more deep,
 Till the bright sun, refreshed, rose clear and fair,
 And clomb the starry steep.

Night dried her lingering tear-drops one by one
 Till all were gone,
 And darkness fled before the rising sun
 To where no sunlight shone.

The merry sunbeams ran to kiss the hills
 Just waked from sleep,
 And hasten'd to the little laughing rills
 And danced upon the deep.

The city woke, her traffic heart began
 To pant and swell;
 But the changes earth had felt 'neath Midnight's span
 One tongue alone may tell.

Some may have woke to find the moments creep
 Without a change:
 But ah! how many may have waked to weep
 Within the world's wide range.

Some may have waked to hail the infant morn
 And bless the light;
 To catch the pleasures on life's pinions borne
 And drink them with delight.

Morn heeds them not, she stops not on her way
 For joy or pain,
 But hastens to proclaim the coming day,
 And leaves the world again.

LITTLE FLORENCE.

Little Florence, fond and free,
 Playing by the apple tree,
 Laughing on her mother's knee—

Sunbeams slanting on her hair,
 Flowing wreaths of flow'rets fair,
 Dangling from her in the air.

Fast and faster go her feet
 Where the grass and sunshine meet:
 Joyful Florence: Life is sweet.

Little Florence, mild and weak,
 Trouble looking from her cheek,
 Scarcely can she move or speak—

Looks out to the falling rain—
All a mother's cares are vain;
Pillows may not ease her pain;

Gladness has a flitting will—
How came she to taste of ill?
Joy is evanescent still.

Little Florence, weak and worn,
Like a faint star left forlorn
Trembling on the point of morn.

Angel forms are in the air,
Flitting on the golden stair,
Bearing up a mother's pray'r.

Little Florence, cold and dead,
Green grass growing overhead,
Waiting for thy wonted tread—

Lying by the apple tree—
Sunshine comes to look for thee,
Comes to crown thy wonted glee.

And thy mother leaves her home,
Comes here, where she used to come.
Silent Florence! Death is dumb.

Little Florence! clothed in white,
Looking back upon the night,
Standing in the shadeless light.

Walking up the golden street,
Sitting at the Saviour's feet,
Where the pure and holy meet.

Shadows stood on yonder shore,
Waiting for thee heretofore;
They shall wait for thee no more.

Thou didst pass them o'er the flood,
Left them standing where they stood—
Angel Florence: God is good.



REV. WILLIAM B. ROBERTSON WILSON.

The Royal Burgh of Irvine has a long roll of names emblazoned on its literary scroll, and one of the most prominent and best known is that of William B. Robertson Wilson. Mr Wilson was educated for the ministry, and in course of time was appointed to the charge of the United Presbyterian Church, Dollar. He is well known as a gifted and prolific prose

writer, as well as a poet of unquestionable merit. Being a keen student of Scottish history and biography he has enriched this particular field of literature by many able magazine and newspaper articles, and as one of Dr Murray's sub-editors, had a share in compiling the "New English Dictionary." In poetical composition Mr Wilson appears to have a predilection for sacred themes. The manuscript of the following pieces was kindly forwarded to us for use in this work:—

"BE OF GOOD CHEER,"

OR

CHRIST'S MOST CHARACTERISTIC MESSAGE TO
MEN.

I.

O men by sin and shame undone
Who feel your palsied nature's need,
Nor dare before God's awful throne
One word in your defence to plead,
Take heart of grace, for still, as when
The word He speaks, you all may hear
Christ's message kind: "'Tis sinful men
Like you I save. Be of good cheer!"

II.

Saints, too, rejoice! Because your King,
Seen as of old in Jesus' form,
Doth now to you salvation bring
In every time of stress and storm,
And 'mid earth's tempests still draws near
To calm your spirits sore dismayed,
With the old words: "Be of good cheer!
Fear not; 'tis I, be not afraid."

III.

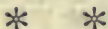
And thou, too, heavy laden one,
Whose heart is faint, whose joys are few,
E'en though thy faith be almost gone,
A like appeal I bring to you.
Give ear to Christ, and thou shalt see
That, as of old, thy Saviour dear
Still gently whispers: "Come to me
And be at rest. Be of good cheer!"

IV.

So brethren all, I pray you heed
Your Master's voice so brave and true,
That aye to cheer your souls in need
Thus speaks: "These things I say to you,
That so in Me you Peace may find;
Trials, indeed, await you here,
Yet dread them not. I leave behind
A vanquished world. Be of good cheer!"

“MAGNE DI, REDDI LUCEM!”

Spirit Divine, arise and shine
 In this doubt-darkened soul of mine.
 Thus bring me back the joyous light
 That to my eager boyhood's sight
 The Christ, as Saviour-God, revealed.
 Next, bid me see Love's Fount unsealed
 In Jesus' breast, whence freely flows
 A stream of grace to heal Life's woes.
 Beholding this, next make me learn
 Once more the beauty to discern
 I saw of old in Jesus' face.
 Thus quickened by revealing grace,
 Oh! may my faith still stronger grow,
 Till each doubt-kindled fear shall go,
 And God's own peace assures my soul
 Christ makes the wounded spirit whole.
 Come then with thy transfiguring light
 On Jesus' face, shine full and bright,
 Then shall I all God's goodness prove
 And banquet daily on His Love.



GAVIN LAWSON.

A few minutes' conversation with Gavin Lawson affords convincing proof that he holds a high opinion of the poet's art, and is of the firm conviction that the poet's true mission should ever be in the direction of ameliorating and elevating the human race. Born in Darvel at a period when educational opportunities were rare, Mr Lawson is to a large extent self taught. When only nine years of age he was sent to be a herd laddie, and at this calling was occupied for about five years, thereafter serving an apprenticeship to the handloom weaving trade. At the expiration of his indenture he abandoned the loom and removed to Glasgow, where he learned the trade of steam-pipe covering, in which line he conducted a business of his own for fifteen years. When the lace-curtain industry was inaugurated in Darvel and further down the Irvine valley, Mr Lawson returned to his native shades, settling first in Darvel and afterwards in Newmilns, where he presently resides. The following specimens of his muse are from a manuscript volume of meritorious verse:—

A VISION OF BURNS. The Departed Spirit Speaks.

"Awake from sleep, and pen some lines for me,
 Though chained by Death, my spirit still is free,
 In many a home, in many a heart I live,
 And all my carping critics freely I forgive.
 None knew my failings better than myself,
 My greatest drawback was the want of health.
 Half-mad with toothache and rheumatic gout,
 I own to kicking stools and chairs about.
 No doubt, at times I acted like a fool,
 But through it all I kept the golden rule,
 Pure in resolve, and formed with passions strong,
 But weak in will, my mind was not my own.
 Led by the Muse, no matter where she strayed,
 I meant no wrong to either man or maid;
 Was slow to censure, ready to forgive;
 For self alone, I knew not how to live.
 Hypocrisy I did my best to kill,
 And tyranny denounced with rustic skill;
 On purse-proud gentry and their haughty brood
 My satire rain'd until it raised a flood
 Of Hatred and Revenge, a mighty wave
 That swept me off to fill an early grave.
 Although quite young, with hope I undertook
 The labour of recording in a book
 My scatter'd thoughts in good old Doric rhyme,
 Affording me much pleasure at the time.
 Some took me serious when I meant it fun,
 And could have shot me with a loaded gun;
 While many men with broader minds and free
 Could see the joke and laugh like you and me.
 May God forgive me if at times I swore.
 I did my best, the best can do no more;
 And if in person I should come again,
 Back to old Scotland free from racking pain,
 The same old course I doubly would pursue,
 Uprooting Wrong that Right might spring anew.
 And I would sing in Her immortal name
 A song of praise that might increase Her fame,
 Her Highland hills and Lowland dales so green
 Deserve a tribute that we have not seen.
 Her sons so brave, and daughters still so fair,
 Command my love and my unceasing pray'r,
 That they may live in peace and sweet content,
 Leading the world in song and sentiment.
 These are the wishes of a brother's heart,
 The cocks are crowing, and I must depart."

When I awoke the Vision quickly fled,
 And left me lying lone, amazed in bed;
 I rose and dress'd, took paper, pen, and ink,
 And wrote my dream, but what will "Robin" think?

MY WEE GRAN' WEANS.

I love to see the faces
O' my wee gran' weans,
And grant the many graces
O' my wee gran' weans.
I am growing old and grey,
And am fast gaun down the brae,
But they cheer me on my way,
Do my wee gran' weans.

Whiles I buy some toys
For my wee gran' weans,
To multiply the joys
O' my wee gran' weans.
When each one gets his choice,
Loud they do rejoice;
O, I wish you heard the noise
O' my wee gran' weans.

They dance and sing like larks
Do my wee gran' weans;
And the dog wi' joy it barks
Wi' my wee gran' weans.
But the tears come to my een
When I think what might have been
Had my record been as clean
As my wee gran' weans.

I soon will have to part
Frae my wee gran' weans;
I'm afraid to wound the heart
O' my wee gran' weans.
But the thought that I've been kind
Will bring solace to my mind,
When about to leave behind
A' my wee gran' weans.

May God aye grant the health
O' my wee gran' weans,
And send sufficient wealth
To my wee gran' weans.
May He keep them aye frae harm,
And make their life a charm,
Till He sounds the last alarm
For my wee gran' weans.

SONG.

THE SONGSTERS OF THE WOOD.

Tune—"Sally in our Alley."

O come with me to yonder grove
And hear the wild-birds singing;
They warble songs of joy and love,
While to the branches clinging;

And in the Springtime o' the year,
 When making love sincerely,
 The saddest souls their songs will cheer—
 They sing so sweet and clearly.

On Sunday morn, when all is still,
 If you are weak or weary,
 Seek Stoneyha' or Windyhill;
 The birds will make you cheery.
 When Nature's in a joyous mood
 Leave every street and alley,
 And come with me to Cessnock Wood;
 There's music in the valley.

The lark while soaring to the sky
 Makes you forget your sorrow.
 And wish that you would never die—
 So come with me to-morrow.
 I'll take you where you'll rapture hear,
 A hundred voices nearly;
 All warbling notes so sweet and clear
 That you will love them dearly.

Those little songsters of the wood
 Are part of God's creation;
 One hour with them will do you good,
 And may be your salvation.
 When you are tossing to and fro
 On life's engulfing billows,
 Oh, seek some haven that you know,
 Where you can hear tit-willows.



WILLIAM FINDLAY, M.D.

The town or village doctor may be a much beloved or widely scandalized person, but he is always granted the hand of good fellowship in the homes where he makes a bold and faithful stand-up fight against the grisly spectre of disease, and the marvel is how anyone engaged in the oft-times harassing and arduous duties of a medical practitioner can find leisure to turn his thoughts to the cultivation of poetry. Yet we have medical men with us to-day who are not only skilled in their profession but equally skilled in the literary arts, and of such is Dr William Findlay, well known in literary circles by the pen name of "George Umber."

Doctor Findlay is a native of Kilmarnock, and in his twentieth year entered himself a student in the Old College, High Street, Glasgow, where he graduated in 1870. After practising medicine for a few months as *locum tenens* at Ratho, near Edinburgh, he returned to Glasgow and established in the

Dennistoun district a successful and constantly increasing practice, from which he retired owing to failing health only some two years ago.

Doctor Findlay's chief literary works are a series of prose sketches and essays published in book form, and which have won for him the not inappropriate title of the "Scottish Charles Lamb." He has made his mark also as a poet of undoubted ability, and is a member of the Ballad Club. Doctor Findlay is a nephew of the late Archibald M'Kay, poet and historian of Kilmarnock, and he has recently edited and supervised a new edition of Mr M'Kay's well-known history of Kilmarnock.

HENRY VAUGHAN, M.D. ("SILURIST").

A Seventeenth Century Country Doctor and Poet.

I.

As boy, and youth, and village doctor grave,
Amid those scenes where first he saw the light,
His span of life, to honoured age, and night
Wherein no man can work, was spent to save
Men's lives. Out of his love and skill he gave
His best, striving to heal, with all his might,
Both rich and poor; for in his doctor's sight
All equal were—the squire and parish knave.
And so amongst the sick, from year to year,
By his beloved Usk, the hills and dales,
And beauteous country lanes of his dear Wales
He rode, with reverence and Godly fear;
While Nature, well-pleased, blabbed her sweetest tales
Into his rapt and list'ning poet's ear.

II.

Though full two hundred years have come and gone
Since he "into the world of light" did pass,
And his prescriptions are as last year's grass,
His patients naught but dust and crumbling bone;
Yet still his poesy, the riper grown
With Time, that all else withereth, alas!
Is more enduring than if graved on brass,
Or sculptured deep on monumental stone;
As full of blessed healing are to-day,
For minds diseased with morbid selfish care,
And hearts bereft of all that made life fair,
The thoughts that breathe and speak in each pure lay;
More medicinal than a good man's pray'r
To chase in shame our grosser selves away.

On reading Dr Dougall's little book of Angling Songs:—

Birds' wood-notes wild, the insect's hum, the bee's,
And noise of tinkling brooks and running streams,
I hear, as one who of his boyhood dreams.
The sight of wild-flow'rs, grass, the dew, and trees

I catch in every line; the very breeze
 Fans fresh my city cheek; and blessed gleams
 Of earth and sky, and witching pale moonbeams
 To-night my ravished mind's eye only sees,
 As home the angler "plods his weary way,"
 With basket full of trout, whose silver mail
 Is rich "bedropped" with spots of "crimson hail,"
 To live in dreamland o'er again this day
 By river bank, and wood, and hill, and dale,
 While through his brain the singing waters play.

THE WADDIN' O' HULLIBALEE.

I aft heard the auld wife in the days o' langsyne,
 When there hap'd in the toun a ram-stam kin' o' spree,
 Whare the guests an' their ways werena owre superfine,
 Say "'Twas just like the waddin' o' Hullibalee."

Sae I asked her ae day what she meant, just in sport,
 An' for answer, "The story," she said, "was nae lee;
 For it fell that dry simmer the corn was sae short,
 Did this won'erfu' waddin' o' Hullibalee.

"In the wast side o' Kyle ance a farmer did bide,
 An' the name o' his mailin was Hullibalee,
 Wha was gaun to be wed to a braw strappin' bride—
 His guid neebour's auld dochter, blithe Shusie M'Cree.

"On the day o' the bridal they cam' frae a' parts—
 Frae Kilmarnock, Tarbouten, an' Troon by the sea—
 On shanks-naigie, on horseback, in gigs, an' in carts,
 The gran' waddin' to haud o' bold Hullibalee.

"There was whisky an' ale, whangs o' bread an' o' cheese,
 Whilk as soon's they arrived 'gan the yaup guests to pree,
 That a wheen were half fou an' richt snug at their ease,
 Ere Mess-John had the lass wed to Hullibalee.

"But the knot ance weel tied, in rare style then began
 Siccan feastin' an' fun, an' sic daffin' an' glee,
 Roun' the table, that groaned wi' the fat o' the lan',
 Whare the young wife sat smirkin' by Hullibalee.

"There were bannocks an' scones, wi' a routh o' thick kail;
 Reekin' haggis an' tatties, forby barley bree;
 Roasts o' mutton an' beef, wi' fou cogs o' guid ale,
 The rich bridal to slokin o' Hullibalee.

"There were fish an' wild fowl, an' twa muckle steak pies,
 An' white puddin's an' black that played spout i' your e'e;
 There were dumplin's an' tarts o' a' shapes an' ilk size,
 At the throughither waddin' o' Hullibalee.

"Siccan eatin' an' drinkin', loud jokes an' daft play,
 Ne'er before did the like o't the parish e'er see;
 An' sic laughin', ilk lass ye could tie wi' a strae,
 As was seen at the waddin' o' Hullibalee.

“There were speeches an’ toasts frae baith greybeards an’ youths,
An’ replies that wad gang frae the point a’ agley,
Ye’d hae thocht that their tongues were owre big for their mouths,
As they fankled aroun’ the word Hullibalee.

“There was fiddlin’ an’ dancin’ by sic as could gang,
Until lang after daylight begun had to dee,
For the feck ’neath the table were a’ sleepin’ thrang,
An’ like thun’er were snorin’ wi’ Hullibalee.

“When the waddin’ broke up there were nane ever ken’d;
Craigie roads the next day the hale way to the sea
Were a’ dotted wi’ guests wha had heids like to rend,
Stragglin’ hame frae the waddin’ o’ Hullibalee.

“Sae a byword it’s been ’mang us ever sin’ syne,
When a party ends up in a wild tirivee,
Be’t a bookin’, a bridal, or Hallowe’en shine,
To the waddin’ we liken’t o’ Hullibalee.”

OCTOBER.

In the Spring, with its tender young buds, some delight,
With its blithe sunny blinks and its brief passing shower,
The rapt trilling of larks ’mongst the clouds hid from sight,
And the tiny sweet face of the pale yellow flower,
That the cold earth beguiles howe’er skies they may lower.

There’s a pleasure in Summer, so luscious and green,
With the kine in the meadow, the sheep on the hill,
When the days they are long and the nights hardly seen,
And the lingering gloamings, so peaceful and still!
That our hearts, brimming over, with tenderness fill.

But the Autumn’s a gipsy with face a nut-brown,
Dressed in tawny wheat plumes and in swaths of gold corn,
With its bold vagrant brooks, their rough beds singing down,
And the newly-gleaned fields lying bare and forlorn,
When the carts the last sheaves to the stackyards have borne.

And the month of October has character rare,
With its woods and its hedges all russet and gold,
And the scent of dead leaves wafted faint through the air,
As they’re whirled and tossed by the winds bleak and cold;
And the beasts at the dark’ning return to the fold.

In the morning the stubble is hoary with rime,
And thick o’er the landscape is spread a dull haze,
Till the sun struggles through and, with colours sublime,
All the woods and the hedges once more sets ablaze,
From vermilion and gold down to ambers and greys.

Then a walk in the country’s the purest delight,
With a carpet of leaves softly spread to the feet,
And the crisp, eager air and the mellow sun bright
Makes the dull city blood all the quicker to beat
In the pulses of those from dim alley and street.

But the joy is short-lived, like most pleasures below;
 Soon the sun 'gins to set and its beams fade away,
 And the snell norland wind all the keener to blow
 O'er the woods and the fields now so pensive and gray,
 As we brood on our own and on nature's decay.

Then how welcome is home and its warm chimney nook,
 Where the season's first fire has been lit in the grate;
 With a pipe and a friend, or alone with a book,
 We defy the jade, care, and the bodings of fate,
 Though the scamper of leaves sounds like ghosts round the gate.



JOHN CAMPBELL.

Human life very much resembles a tiny stream, the course of which the displacing or planting of a tiny pebble can turn aside and cause it to flow in another channel. John Campbell, a native of Kilbirnie, was apprenticed when about thirteen years of age to the trade of a compositor, and his latent powers of poesy might have remained undiscovered but that fortune chanced to turn the current of his life in this direction. In the course of his apprenticeship it was his good luck to have the work assigned him of setting up the poems of a master lyrist, and stirred to metrical emotion by the strains of Hugh Macdonald, Mr Campbell ultimately blossomed into the author of a selection of poems and songs, entitled "Wayside Warblings," which passed through two editions.

The following love lilt will recall to those who have reached the "crown of life's brae" the days when the juvenescent heart "lightly turns to thoughts of love."

O, give me the gloaming, the saft simmer gloaming,
 When shadows dance licht frae the boughs o' each tree!
 Though bright is day's dawning, O gi'e me its waning,
 For O 'tis the hour, love, that takes me to thee!

Though fair be the rising, the beauty surprising,
 O' Phœbus' first smile as it spreads o'er the lea;
 Mair prized is the treasure an' sweeter the pleasure
 Which comes wi' the hour, love, that takes me to thee.

The day may be dreary, wi' heart sair and weary,
 And heavy the cares since morn op'd my e'e;
 They flee at the wiling, sae witching, beguiling,
 Which breathes in the hour, love, that takes me to thee.

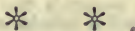
Though full be the measure of gladness and pleasure—
 Happy moment of life ilka heart lo'es to pree;
 Too soon these may perish, but aye I will cherish
 The bliss o' that hour, love, the hour I meet thee.

Then give me day's ending, when freedom is blending
 Wi' love's gowden sun-glints on life's restless sea,
 O then there comes stealing love's holiest feeling—
 A bliss maist divine, love, the hour I meet thee.



THOMAS RICHARDSON.

Thomas Richardson is a native of Kilmarnock, where in early manhood he was known as a talented singer. His vocal gifts brought him the reward of a precentorship first in a Galston church and afterwards in a church in Ayr, where for a time he also held the appointment of organist. He holds a Diploma of Music from the Tonic Sol-fa College, London. In Ayr, where he presently resides, he was engaged as a rural postman for the long term of thirty-one years. Artless simplicity is the chief characteristic of his poetical lisplings.



JAMES COOK.

The humorist who can turn a weeping world to laughter will be tendered the hand of good fellowship wherever he goes, for a good laugh is as medicine to the soul, and every good soul needs it betimes. James Cook, who belongs to the well-known musical family of that name in Kilbirnie, has the knack of writing humorous lilt and can trig out his thoughts in the funniest and most whimsical array. On reading his light verse we recall the words of another bard who says:—

“I’ve criticised some mortals in my time,
 An’ some o’ them was great an’ some was not;
 There was some as couldn’t jingle worth a dime,
 There was ‘Omer, Billy Shakespeare, Watty Scott;
 But for knockin’ fun and po’try into one
 It’s certain sure you easy take the bun.”

Our poet presently follows the trade of a heckler in the works of W. & J. Knox, Kilbirnie.



REV. SAMUEL WILSON.

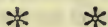
The Rev. Samuel Wilson, who is a native of Irvine, and brother of the Rev. W. B. Robertson Wilson, of Dollar, makes no pretensions to the high-sounding title of poet. Mr Wilson

was trained for the clerical profession in Glasgow University and in the Divinity Hall of the United Presbyterian Church, and was eventually licensed to preach by the Presbytery of Ayr. After a year on the probation list he accepted the appointment of chaplain to Cuninghame Combination Poorhouse, and has devoted his whole energies to the spiritual welfare of that institution for the past twenty years.

Mr Wilson's pen-picture of the late Rev. Dr Robertson, of Irvine, will be read with interest by all who knew the fluent poet-preacher in the early days of his ministry.

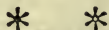
LINES ON SEEING DR ROBERTSON'S PORTRAIT.

Whose portrait this, the artist well portrays?
 'Tis far-famed Robertson of earlier days!
 Ye who love pictures gaze upon that face,
 O'er which rare genius sheds immortal grace;
 The dew of youth sits on the lofty brow
 Round which dark, curling locks luxuriant flow;
 Thought in the clear-cut Grecian features glows—
 Thus marble lives beneath the sculptor's blows—
 His cheeks and chin a feminine beauty show;
 His large, full eyes all depths of feeling know;
 Those curv'd lips speak eloquence divine;
 The tapering shoulders, figure, all combine
 To mark the Poet-Preacher as he wooed
 To paths divine the Christ-drawn multitude.



GEORGE BOYD.

Some one has likened education to a paint which does not improve the nature of the wood that is under it, but only improves its appearance a little. While this may be true to a certain extent, education and paint are here to stay, and the housewife and coachpainter will each remain confirmed in the opinion that paint at anyrate can work marvels. In the hands of George Boyd, a native of Kilmarnock, it has indeed worked wonders, for Mr Boyd is not only a house decorator but a painter of landscapes as well. He has devoted some leisure likewise to the sister art of poesy without, however, so far as we know, committing himself to the sin of publishing a book.



C. J. SHEARER.

Under many divergent conditions and varied circumstances do we find the plant of poesy putting forth blossom and bearing

fruit, and it is difficult to imagine environment as having aught of influence on the growth or decay of poetical emotion. The truth is that poetry, being the earliest mode of expression, has become as irrepressible in certain individuals as the mountain spring which refuses to be stemmed and leaps jubilantly defiant over every obstacle. The educational opportunities offered C. J. Shearer, Ardrossan, may have fitted him for filling a high place in shipping circles, but we are certain from the natural and easy flow of his verse that his poetical talents required no exceptional opportunities to promote them, and if he had been born a hedger and ditcher, with no opportunities of education beyond what is to be learned in the school of experience, he still would have given expression to his thoughts in lines which, in the opinion of a reviewer, are "genuinely Shakespearian."

There is undoubtedly a true poetic ring in the poem entitled

A FAREWELL.

Farewell! for the hour is arisen,
 The hour that we feared;
 And the gleam that illumin'd our prison
 Has all disappeared.
 It has vanish'd from roof-tree and ceiling,
 It has died on the wall;
 And the gloom of a desolate feeling
 Is over us all.

Like the star that the Dawn brings in gladness
 Thou didst rise on our day;
 Like the star that the Eve wears in sadness,
 Thou dost vanish away.
 We are shipwreck'd in darkness and sorrow
 On a desolate shore,
 And the dread of the darker to-morrow
 Is worse than before.

Farewell! thou hast sweeten'd our labour,
 Thou hast lighten'd our load;
 And the joy thou didst bring as a neighbour
 Hath shorten'd the road!
 Thou hast led to our sorrowful dwelling
 Sweet sunshine and light,
 To our day-songs of happiness telling,
 And stars to our night.

Still, in thought, we will follow thy going,
 Through long weary years,
 As we now mark thy form fainter growing
 Through eyes dim with tears;
 Like the gleam of a dying emotion
 Far over the land,
 Now the day-star hath sunk in the ocean,
 And the night is at hand.

WILLIAM BROWN SMITH.

William Brown Smith was a devoted student of the three sister arts, poetry, painting, and music, all of which he cultivated with more or less success. His talent for music found a profitable exercise in his calling as leader of psalmody in the Free Church of his native town, Saltcoats. His poetical pieces were issued from the Ardrossan Press in two volumes, entitled "Life Scenes" and "The World Without and Within." We have not seen these volumes, but one or two extracts convince us that his muse does not soar very far into the veiled empyrean of loftiest imagination.



JOHN BLAIR WILSON.

"Let the soldier be abroad if he will," said a great statesman, "he can do nothing in this age. There is another personage—the schoolmaster is abroad, and I trust to him, armed with his primer, against the soldier in full military array." On these grounds John Blair Wilson belongs to the profession which is more militant than the military, and which has enabled the pen to rise superior to the sword.

Mr Wilson has written a goodly number of fugitive pieces, but he makes no claim to be other than an occasional votary of the Tuneful Nine. His muse is strictly lyrical, and some of his songs have been set to music. Mr Wilson was born in Irvine, and is a cousin of the Rev. Samuel Wilson and of the Rev. W. B. Robertson Wilson, of Dollar. He is presently engaged as headmaster of Garallan School, Old Cumnock.

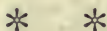
AYE TAK' TENT AND DINNA FA'.

(Music by John H. M'Millan, Cumnock.)

Tak' ye tent my wee bit bairnie,
 Staun' yer lane noo aft the wa',
 Come in safe to mither's armie,
 Toddle weel and dinna fa'.
 Haud thy wee haun's weel before ye;
 Blythest wean that e'er I saw;
 Steady noo, and dinna fear ye,
 Aye tak' tent and dinna fa'.

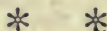
Weel you've dune yer wee bit toddle,
 And thy gleesome lauchs couse a';
 Ance richt stertit dinna fear ye;
 Steady aye, and ye'll na fa'.
 And when fechtin' through life's battle,
 Don't gang aft the road awa';
 Aye straucht forrit and keep steady,
 Tak' ye tent and dinna fa'.

And be honest and straucht forrit,
 Tak' the Bible for yer law;
 Canny aye, and no' too hurrit,
 Or ye may be apt to fa'.
 Mind noo what yer mither tells ye—
 Don't forget when she's awa':
 "Aye tak' tent—ask Guid to guide ye,
 Then yer sure ye winna fa'."



ROBERT CUMMING M'FEE, R.N.R.

Robert Cumming M'Fee was a minstrel who tuned his songs to the "beat of the off-shore wind, and the thresh of the deep-sea rain." Early in life he left his native town of Saltcoats and engaged in a sea-faring life, rising to be captain of one of the Anchor Line ships, and in 1880 was appointed shore superintendent of the line. Some seven years later the Lords of Admiralty conferred on him the titular honour of Honorary Commander of the Royal Naval Reserve. Captain M'Fee was well known in social and literary circles in Glasgow, and was for a time a member of the Pen and Pencil Club.



DAVID CUTHBERTSON.

David Cuthbertson, whose lyrical gifts have for many years been well known and appreciated, adds another name to the long roll of poets who claim Kilmarnock as the town of their nativity. Mr Cuthbertson spent much of his time in and around Edinburgh, where he received a good commercial training, first in a drapery establishment and afterwards as clerk to a firm of rubber manufacturers, whose employment he left on account of his health, and was eventually appointed assistant librarian in the Philosophical Institute.

He is the author of several volumes of verse which the Fates have not yet permitted us to see, but from the following

homely strain readers will be satisfied that his harp has a lyrical ring:—

THE AULD FOLK.

The kind auld folk I kent langsyne
 Are deein' fast awa';
 An' slidin' gently doon the brae,
 Wi' hair as white as snaw.
 I liked to hear them crack awa',
 Fu' couthy, frank, and free,
 An' tell about their former days
 Wi' half a boyish glee.

Ay! ay! the auld folk quickly gang
 An' fade frae oot oor sicht!
 Their gude auld-farrant tongues nae mair
 We hear them wag at nicht.
 An' bonnie weans wi' curly hair,
 Wha lo'ed their grandpa weel;
 Each learn the frost o' early spring—
 First sorrows when they feel.

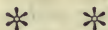
The dear auld folk wha sat forenent
 The ingleside at e'en;
 Hoo mony lie beneath the sod!
 Hoo mony graves are green!
 Oor hearts a stoun' in pain aft feel,
 To think nae mair we'll hear
 The honest hearty phrase o' truth,
 An' kindly word o' cheer.

We wander but and ben the hoose,
 Fu' dowie, doon wi' care—
 For oh! we miss the dear auld folk,
 We see the empty chair.
 Ay! there's the Book they lo'ed sae weel,
 An' often used to read;
 An' there's the stick—a trusty frien'—
 Which never mair they'll need.

We gang beside each glen and brae
 We kent in days gane by;
 An' wander up and doon the street—
 Ah me! how time doth fly!
 Familiar forms how few we meet
 Beside the ripplin' burn—
 It's strange hoo mony folk we miss,
 Whichever way we turn.

The auld kirkyaird is quiet and still,
 Where dead in silence lie;
 The wind moans o'er the grassy graves
 With plaintive, moaning sigh.
 The bairns aft pluck the gowans sweet
 Frae aff their juicy stem—
 The auld folk are "a' wede awa'"
 To grace His diadem.

A blessin' on the leal auld folk,
 Whose cares are owre at last;
 They've warstled oot the road awa',
 An' peace they've gained at last.
 Then kindly speak where e'er you be—
 To auld folk aye be true;
 For age is takin' them awa',
 An' comin' fast to you.



JOHN YOUNG.

Previous to the introduction of steam-power machinery in Ayrshire, the inhabitants of almost every village had some experience of hand-loom weaving, as it was then the only available industry for young lads who elected to remain in their native village.

John Young, who is a native of Darvel, learned the trade of hand-loom weaving, and in course of time transferred his services to the firm of Messrs Hood, Morton & Co., power-loom wincey manufacturers, Newmilns. When this company began to manufacture lace and madras curtains Mr Young was appointed to a charge in the leno department, and when the firm was resolved into a Limited Company some years ago he was promoted to the post of a managing director. Successful in business, he has nevertheless found time to engage in the work of social reform, and is the originator of the Band of Hope in his native village, besides filling the presidential chair of the Young Men's Christian Association.

Although Mr Young has never been induced to publish his verse in book form, he is proud to hold letters of acknowledgment and appreciation from such exalted personages as Queen Alexandra and the present Lord Tennyson, for original pieces forwarded to them, when under the cloud of affliction.

The following selections from Mr Young's pen will afford the reader some food for reflection:—

LEISURE HOUR MUSINGS.

In this weary vale of shadows,
 Strange and sad life often seems,
 As its visions rise before us
 But to pass like transient dreams.
 Near the haunts of happy pleasures
 Homes of sorrow too are found;
 And the sweetest songs of music
 Seem to blend with grief's low sound.

Far away our thoughts may wander
 To yon other world more fair,
 Where the bright scenes are unfading,
 Where there's neither sin nor care.
 All around us here is fleeting,
 All life's varied scenes so strange
 Seem to whisper forth the echo—
 There is nothing here but change.

Now the cold winds seem to tell us,
 Time is speeding swiftly on;
 Season after season passes,
 With the happy days now gone.
 Think, then, on the homes of sorrow
 We might brighten with sweet cheer,
 As the time goes rolling o'er us,
 Swiftly o'er us, year by year.

Cold and cheerless, some are struggling
 'Neath the world's chilling frown,
 Some, whose burdens we might lighten,
 Ere they bear them harshly down.
 Long amid life's gloomy shadows,
 Some have struggled unbemoaned,
 With few loving ones to help them
 To the better land beyond.

Ah, how many precious jewels
 Might be brightened up to shine,—
 Sparkling gems of purest lustre,—
 Reflexes of the Ray Divine.
 Silently they seem to whisper
 "Will you help us, too, to share
 Some of those delightful foretastes
 Of the bright 'home over there?'"

Sweet and happy are the moments
 Spent in helping pilgrims on;
 They will form unfading green-spots,
 Blooming in the ages gone.
 Ever may our footsteps wander
 In the path our Master trod,
 As we daily journey onward,
 Nearer home, and nearer God.

* * * * *

WATER.

There is a liquor brewed by God, not in a simmering still
 Where poisonous gases freely flow from smoky fires at will;
 'Tis not surrounded with the stench of a stifling, sickening air,
 For you will find where it is brewed there's nought but beauty
 there.
 Then hear where God is brewing it, the water clear and pure,
 The drink prepared for all mankind, of that we may be sure.
 It forms the essence of our life, prepared by Him on high,
 To quench the thirst of travellers when their tongues are parched
 and dry.

He brews it in the green glade, and in the grassy dell,
 Where grow the well-known wild flowers, the gowan and bluebell,
 Where too the cattle wander the lea-long summer day,
 And where the children ramble forth in love and joy to play.
 And low down in the valleys we hear the water's song,
 While listening to the breeze which bears the daily sound along.
 He brews it where the fountains and rills so sweetly sing,
 And high upon the mountain tops He makes it, too, to spring.

Where the rocks are bravely towering their heads up to the sky,
 Where the loud wind howls its music as it fiercely passes by;
 He brews it in the waves which form the sailors' watery road,
 Where they loudly swell the chorus, "Sweeping the march of
 God."

'Tis there He makes the water, that beverage of life,
 Which drags no pilgrim downward, nor can engender strife,
 And everywhere we see it a thing of beauty bright,
 As o'er the beauteous landscape we look with sweet delight.

We see it in the dewdrop, so sweetly gleaming there,
 That it seems like a precious diamond of value rich and rare;
 We hear it sweetly singing in the summer's gentle rain,
 And how we love to listen then to hear its sweet low strain.
 We see it brightly shining, too, in the ice-gems so clear,
 When all around seems barren, and the landscape looks so drear;
 It beams from the leafy woodland, like jewels sparkling fair,
 Forming to all admiring eyes a scene of beauty rare.

And brightly o'er the setting sun it spreads a golden veil,
 Or round the midnight moon to wake the moonlight sweet though
 pale.

It calmly sleeps in glaciers, and sports in the waterfall,
 And then it seems to sing, I come, as a friend to one and all.
 It dances in the hailshowers, or with snow curtains bright,
 It folds this wintry world of ours in a matchless robe of white,
 It weaves the coloured iris, that spans at times the sky,
 And its design is sketched by Him who rules both earth and sky.

The warp is but the rain of earth, the woof comes from above,
 'Tis chequered with celestial flowers by a mystic Hand in love;
 We see its beauty everywhere, above us and around,
 Then gladly let us use it, and its advocate be found.
 Upon its brink we'll never see the poison bubbling there,
 Which drags poor weary pilgrims down to sadness and despair;
 And, ah, no bloodstains can be seen upon its liquid glass,
 Then safely from each others hands the water pure may pass.

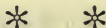
IN WINTER REMEMBER THE PUIR.

Oh, the simmer is gane, an' the floo'rs are awa',
 An' the lilt o' each bird's a refrain,
 Sounding low 'mang the branches sae leafless an' bare,
 For the lang days to come back again;
 But the cauld, cauld snaws o' the winter will come,
 An' the fields will hae food then nae mair,
 While the weans wi' their daddies will play roun' the fire,
 Safely shield' frae the keen frosty air.

But, oh! there are hames whar the winter's mair drear,
 Whar the cauld win's o' poverty blaw,
 Whar the lang simmer days bring but dark clouds o' care,
 Wi' nae sweet silver edgin' ava',
 An' the sough o' the snell eerie win' is sae chill
 On the puir folk sae hungry and bare:
 Wha wadna be touched when their wan face is turned?
 For the glance o' their e'e is a prayer.

Nae wonner their hearts are oft tired wi' the road,
 For the load is sae heavy they bear,
 An' the puir mither hugs her wee bairn to her breist,
 While the faither sits weary and sair;
 But, oh! when their thochts to the Guid Book are turned,
 There's a glimmer o' licht through it a',
 An' they tell ane anither it's but for a wee,
 Then a hame in the land far awa'

Whar the darkness and chill o' black winter ne'er comes,
 For the life there's ae lang simmer day,
 An' there's aye plenty there, whare the heart's never sair,
 In the hameland whar floo'rs ne'er decay.
 Oh, ye wha ha'e plenty, look frae ye aroon,
 An' lichten the cares o' some brither,
 For the Maister Himsel' bids us mind an' tak' care
 An' be helpfu' the ane to the ither.



JAMES MAGOWEN.

It appears that if a person has the innate faculty for writing verse, no circumstance or turning key of fate will tap the muse more readily than bidding a long farewell to the land of one's birth. Mr James Magowen hails originally from Kilmarnock, but left that old town before he was age enough to realize the pleasures of "a flittin'," and settled in Galston, where he began to earn a pittance as "piece boy" in the blanket-mill. Finding this work uncongenial he entered the services of the late Mr James Torrance, printer, Galston, and eventually established a good stationery and printing business of his own, which he conducted until a partial breakdown in health compelled him to seek a sunnier clime, and he chose Cape Town as the city of his adoption. Within a few months of his arrival there he discovered within himself a well of poesy, and having once tapped the fount of Helicon it continues to flow a perennial stream of deep heart-felt yearnings for the friends and scenes which he left behind him in "bonnie Scotland." Mr Magowen removed a few years ago to Pretoria, where he now conducts a flourishing printing trade of his own. Since settling there he has been appointed Poet Laureate of the

Caledonian Society, and composes an original ode for each St. Andrew's Festival.

"THE HAMELAND."

There will be poothier o' snaw on Ben Lomond,
 An' showers o' sleet i' the Wast,
 An' the storm-wind o'er Highland and Lowland
 Blawin' drear wi' November's cauld blast.
 And the heather asleep on the hillsides,
 The burnies in flood wi' the rain,
 The floo'rs on the glen sides awaitin'
 The comin' o' Springtime again.

The trees are a' bare in the Hameland,
 That in summer were deck'd out sae gay;
 But the snawdraps will soon come peepin'
 To tell o' the lengthening day.
 Then the woods will be ringin' wi' music
 O' birdies on ilka green tree,
 An' their whistlin' comes into the day-dreams
 O' the Scotsman far ower the sea.

Ah! we've each in our heart our ain picture
 (As we're gather'd this Sanct Andrew's Nicht)
 O' the city, the toon, or the clachan
 Whaur we first set our e'en on the licht.
 It may be o' bright days o' sunshine,
 Or winter wi' mantle o' snaw,
 Or the frien's we remember sae kindly
 In the days that noo seem far awa'.

We are sons o' a land rich in story,
 Whase fame has ga'en oot ower the earth,
 Let us ne'er cast a stain on her glory,
 For we're proud o' the land o' our birth,
 Where Wallace and Bruce fought for freedom,
 Where Burns sang o' Brotherhood true,
 Where the men o' the mosshags and hillsides
 Upheld the auld Banner o' Blue.

And our hearts, hoo they warm to the Tartan,
 Hoo the auld sangs still ring in our ear,
 Like "The Auld Hoose" or "Logie o' Buchan,"
 Or "The Flowers o' the Forest" sae dear.
 Let us pledge, then, again the dear Hameland,
 Auld Scotia—the land that we lo'e;
 May the hearts o' her sons aye beat warmly,
 An' their deeds aye be upright and true.

THE HEART'S WIRELESS TELEGRAPH.

I bow my head in the twilight
 In the land across the sea,
 And the myriad sounds of the Homeland
 Are wafted across to me.

I hear in the autumn cornfields
 The harvesters all day long,
 And the sound of the constant reaper,
 Like a tireless giant's song.

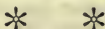
I hear the woodland songsters
 At the early dawn of day,
 And in the heat of the noontide
 Trilling their tuneful lay.

At night when the gloamin' gathers
 Over the hill and dale,
 I hear the call of the owlet
 With its weird and eerie wail.

I hear the voices of children
 In the summer glad and free;
 I hear the murmur of streamlets
 On their way to the mighty sea.

I hear the loving voices
 Of friends on the distant shore;
 Alas! I hear the voices
 Of friends I shall see no more.

And so, in the rapid twilight,
 'Neath the stars of the southern sky,
 Those sounds that are wafted to me
 Bring the Homeland very nigh.



REV. JOHN THOMSON LEVENS.

John Thomson Levens was born in Saltcoats, and at an early age learned what it is to be sent adrift on the precarious sea of life without the guiding counsel of a father or the tender devotion of a mother. In his fourteenth year he proceeded to London, where he finished his school education, and subsequently became a pupil teacher under the School Board of London.

In course of time he was appointed assistant teacher at Barrow-in-Furness. Leaving this place in 1882, he proceeded to St. Andrews, attended the United College for a session, and afterwards enrolled himself as a student at Glasgow University, where he distinguished himself as an essayist and a poet. His poem on "Ailsa Craig" was adjudged by Professor Nichol to be the best poetical composition of the class. Mr Levens was eventually appointed to a pastoral charge. He is the author of scholarly prose sketches, essays, and criticisms which have appeared from time to time in educational journals and newspapers. We append a specimen of Mr Levens' translations,

from which it will be found that "Horace still charms with pleasing negligence and without method talks us into sense."

TO THE LUTE OF LYRIC POETRY.

Translation from Horace—Book I., Ode 32.

They summon us. If e'er 'neath leafy shade
Thou at my touch hast sportive lyrics played,
Whose notes may live this year and many more,
Prompt, O my lute, a lay of Latium's shore.

Thou first attuned by him of Lesbia's isle,
Whose dauntless soul at war's alarms could smile,
And when his bark by wave and storm toss'd long
Was safely moored, would cheer his heart with song.

And hymn the praise of Bacchus, god of wine,
Of lovely Venus and the Muses nine;
Of Cupid ever by his mother's side,
And Lycus, young and fair, dark-tressed, dark-eyed.

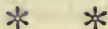
O, shell, the ornament of Phœbus! meet
To grace the feasts of Jove. O, solace sweet
Of care and trouble—unto me give ear,
When duly calling thee, be kind and hear!

LOVE LASTS FOR AYE.

Though the ocean, deep and braid,
Rolls atween us, dinna think
That the chain our love has made
Can be broken, link frae link.

Dinna think our love maun dee,
Tho' in different lands we bide;
Love is braider than the sea,
Love is deeper than the tide.

Thought is swifter than the wind,
An' my thoughts aye fly to thee,
For I left my heart behind,
An' where the heart, the thought will be.



D. T. HOLMES, B.A.

It is not every poet who takes the trouble to search for truth, imagination, and poetic beauty in Academic groves, with the same laborious care as Mr D. T. Holmes, for whom the beauties of the Grecian lyre possess a fascination so thrilling

and intense that he seems to have caught the pure inspiration of the classic bards, as shown in his volume of translations entitled "Greek Lyrics." In this little work the reader will find much æsthetical pleasure which will perhaps recall the words of another poet:—

"What presence from the heavenly heights
To those of earth stoops down?
Not vainly Hellas dreamt of gods
On Ida's snowy crown."

Mr Holmes adds another to the long list of poets hailing from Irvine. He is a cultured and scholarly writer, as will be seen not only from his poetical pieces, but also from his prose works, a list of which will be found in the Bibliography attached to this work. In 1891 he gained the degree of B.A. at London University, and in the following year was appointed assistant master in Greenock Academy, from which he was afterwards promoted to Paisley Grammar School as headmaster of the English department. He subsequently visited the Continent, residing for about three years in Paris and Geneva, where he studied the language and literature of France. Since returning to Scotland he has devoted some time to giving lectures on Scottish Literature and Poets, his lecture on Robert Burns being described by Dr J. M. Barrie as the finest and most impressive he has ever listened to on the subject. Since the year 1904 Mr Holmes has been engaged looking after the interests of the library scheme founded by Mr James Coats, of Paisley, a work for which his natural abilities qualify him in an eminent way.

POETICAL PREFACE TO "LITERARY TOURS IN THE HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS OF SCOTLAND."

White stands the long Kilpatrick row
Of hills with deep and dazzling snow,
And eastward in a glimmering haze
Stretch to the Forth the Campsie Braes.

But see! beyond the Clyde a stain
Of smoke that runs across the plain
And flecks for miles the vivid gleam:
It is the tireless steed of steam.

An old acquaintance! Ben and strath
Daily behold his thunderous path,
That ceases not until he feels
The breeze of Mallaig cool his wheels.

And Memory, fondly gazing back
On many a journey by that track
Of splendour, would, at home, retrace
The charms and lore of every place:

Yea, pass, in thought, to storied sky,
Where all the glens in glamour lie;
And, lightly scorning gust and spray,
Leap o'er the Minch to Stornoway.

And many a northern beach besides,
Splashed by the foam of racing tides,
Rises in thought: from here to there
Let Fancy's coinage pay the fare—

Fancy that wafts us o'er the main
To utmost Thule and home again,
Through mingled din of sea and sky,
Even in the twinkling of an eye.

DR GEORGE MACDONALD'S CREED.

(Written at Cullen.)

God will not suffer that a single one
Of His own creatures, in His image made,
Should die, and in irrevocable shade
Lie evermore—neglected and undone.
It is not thus a father treats his son,
And those whose folly credits it degrade
God's love and fatherhood, that never fade,
By lies as base as devils ever spun.
Man's love is but a pale reflex of God's,
And God is love, and never will condemn
Beyond remission—though He school with rods—
His children, but will one day comfort them.
Dives will have his drink at last, and stand
Among the faithful ones at God's right hand.

THE SOUND OF RAASAY IN DECEMBER.

A snowy gust is whirling down the strait,
Raasay is gleaming ghostly to the sight,
And, robed in lawn, from sea to topmost height,
Skye and her lordly mountains stand in state.
Ever from heaven falls the silent weight
Of wavering flakes that dim the stars of night.
Our gallant litle boat with all the might
Of the wild, hissing surges holds debate,
Plunging and struggling, till at last we see
A spacious haven, sudden and serene,
And, high aloft, the twinkle of Portree.
At once the winds are hushed, the moon is seen
To free her face from cloudy drift, and fill
With silver light the clefts of Essie Hill.

AMERICAN TOURIST LOQUITUR.

(At Berridale, Caithness.)

If I had wealth of Vanderbilt,
 Or some such millionaire,
 I'd live in Scotland, don a kilt,
 And pay to prove my forbears spilt
 Their blood in forays there.

I'd buy a picturesque estate
 Beside the ocean's flow,
 With knolls of heather at my gate,
 And pine-clad hills to dominate
 The ferny dells below.

I'd be a father to the folk
 That laboured on the soil,
 With old and young I'd crack my joke,
 Drink with them in their thirst, and smoke
 The pipe that lightens toil.

For hens I'd have a special run,
 For ducks a special pool;
 My calves should frolic in the sun,
 My sheep should be surpassed by none
 Whose backs are clothed with wool.

Although I'm not a Walton quite,
 Between whiles I should try
 To lure the finny tribe to bite
 (At the right time, in the right light)
 My simulated fly.

When winter heaped his rattling hail
 High on the window sill,
 With pipe and wassail, rime and tale,
 I'd never miss the nightingale
 Or cuckoo on the hill.

Nay, musing by the ingle-lowe,
 With summer in my brain,
 I'd clothe with leaves the frozen bough,
 And all the ice-bound brooks endow
 With tinkling life again.

THE PROLOGUE OF PERSEUS.

(From "Greek Lyrics.")

I never quaffed poetic draughts from the Winged Courser's fount,
 Nor laid my noddle down to dream on that inspiring mount
 Which rears its twin-peaks in the air, that so, thereafter, I
 Might spring upon the raptured town some stylish lullaby
 I leave the Heliconian maids and pale Pirone too,
 To get their high-faluting praise from that poetic crew

Whose noble faces, cut in stone, with ivy-tendrils wreathed,
 Attest the grandeur of the lines their mighty souls have breathed.
 My 'prentice muse is all unfit with bards like these to sup,
 A trivial song or two is all that I can muster up.
 Consider, friends, how pretty Poll can screech his "How d'ye do?"
 And how the magpie with her beak can talk our lingo too;
 The belly is their teacher, sirs, and thereby do I prove
 There's no impediment so great that hunger wont remove;
 That teaches bards as well as birds, and once let money shine
 And give a hint to starveling wits of the wherewithal to dine,
 Then husky poets clear their throats and sing Homeric lays,
 And little poetesses pipe their twittering roundelays.

TO M. E. H.

(From "Greek Lyrics.")

O, do ye mind, my lass, the days
 O' bright and sunny weather,
 When ower the heathery Hielan' hills
 We roamed for hours thegither?
 The sun was ne'er before sae bright,
 The air sae glancin' free,
 The world was heaven to our sight,
 Made just for you and me.
 We travelled north, we travelled south,
 And blithesome sights did see,
 But the bonniest sight was the fire o' youth,
 And the love-light in your e'e.
 I dinna ask for acres braid,
 Nor gowden guineas fine,
 Nor, like a merchant gathering gear,
 To tempt the roaring brine.
 Ah, no! my lass, far better here,
 Wi' you I love to stray,
 Along these old romantic shores
 Singing the hours away.

AN INVOCATION TO BACCHUS.

(From "Greek Lyrics.")

Come, O Bacchus, tutelary god of Thebes,
 Come to this thy town and drive its grief away.

O Bacchus, rich in titled pride,
 Semele's son with Zeus for sire
 (She was a radiant Theban maid,
 And he, the lord of the levin-fire),
 Italia's vales are thy delight
 And fair Eleusis' world-famed rite.

Amid thy frantic votaress-band,
 'Tis thy delight, O prince, to stay
 Here where Ismenus soaks the sand
 Along his winding water-way;
 Thy faithful subjects, might-endued,
 Do boast a race of dragon-brood.

And gleaming through its murky wreath
Of smoke, the leaping torch-light flame
Burns in thine honour, while, beneath,
Parnassus hears the loud acclaim
Corykian maidens, moving, sing,
Beside the famed Castalian spring.

And on the ivied mountain-knolls,
And shores that ring Euboea's isle
With verdant vines, thy footstep falls,
Hasting to thy dear town the while;
And she whom Zeus with splendour slew,
Thy mother, companies with thee too.

Thy healing hand we eager crave,
A plague has smit thy darling town:
Thy presence, lord, is strong to save,
O swiftly succour us cast-down:
Come o'er the fair Parnassian haunt,
Or murmuring firth of Negropont.

Hail! leader of the twinkling light
Of torches borne by Naxian maids,
Who voice thy praise with mad delight,
And nimbly foot it in the glades;
Shine on us, mover of the dance,
The bright light of thy countenance.

* *

ARTHUR WILSON.

When a young man of some twenty summers has the fortune to come before the public with a volume of verse, we do not as a rule open the pages in expectation of finding them filled with ripe and polished productions of the mind, more especially if we know the author to be a working man with no more than an ordinary village-school education. Arthur Wilson, of Dalry, who issued "Lays of the Mine," was apprenticed to the trades of weaving and spinning, but changed his calling and eventually became a coal miner. His innate faculty for weaving and spinning rhymes began with his apprenticeship to the other trades, and his lispsings were eventually published by James M'Kie, Kilmarnock.

* *

GAVIN MORTON.

The innate faculty—says Huxley—for science, art, or poesy needs only to be touched in some minds to spring into

full vigour. We know not what influence first induced Gavin Morton to turn his thoughts into rhythm, but doubtless an acquaintance with the rich melodies of the masters of song wielded considerable power over his youthful mind. Mr Morton is the eldest son of Alexander Morton, Esq. of West Gowanbank, Darvel, the well-known pioneer of the lace curtain industry in Ayrshire. After a course of schooling in Darvel Public School and in Ayr Academy, he entered the firm at Darvel, of Messrs Alexander Morton & Company. Since entering upon his business career less of the energy of his nature has found expression in verse, but we still occasionally get a few radium-like flashes from his pen. His descriptive pieces shew considerable power of picturesque effect, and when he touches the emotional chord he evinces a marked leaning towards the new humanity school of religious thought.

Mr Morton removed some years ago to Carlisle as managing partner of the carpet works established there by Messrs Alexander Morton & Company.

HAZE AND BLAZE.

The sun o'erhead is all ablaze
And dense the zenith blue,
Which whitens to the distant haze
With faint and fainter hue,
And far-off through the mist there shines
The glittering sea in silver lines.

The pale hills tint by tint recede;
Hush! not a dead leaf stirs;
All's lost in light but glittering roofs
And heavy-headed firs;
And far-off, hit by random rays,
Gleams forth the sea-line all ablaze.

What hearty wooing by the sun!
Glad earth thus wooed to be,
Whose breath this bridal veil hath spun,
And 'neath it blusheth she!
And through this mist of happy dreams
Far-off the flashing sea-line gleams.

INFINITE BLUE.

Infinite blue in the skies,
Infinite blue in the sea,
Infinite blue in those baby eyes
Gazing up at me!

Union of earth and skies,
Those widths of infinite blue:
And those great baby eyes
Are windows for God to look through.

CALM IS THE WOOD.

Calm is the wood
 Of Solitude
 With none but softest sounds;
 O sweet retreat
 From high-day heat
 And noisy rounds!
 Hither you may
 Awhile to pray,
 But not to stay
 Always.

We eat to live
 Not live to eat,
 We live to give
 Life savour sweet;
 We've frames to fill,
 We've ground to till,
 We've seed to sow,
 We've souls to grow.

SHADOWS.

Face the sun, your shadows fall
 Behind your backs;
 Turn, as spectres grim and tall
 They haunt your tracks;
 Sidelings go, you squint aslant
 As horses shy;
 Then onward, though you sweltering pant,
 And do or die!

WHEN MADAME BELLE COLE SANG.

Where comes it from, that lofty sound,
 So pure, so mellow, and so round?
 If of this earth, then how divine
 Earth's vessels, full of heavenly wine!
 Or are those opening lips a chink
 For heaven to pass to earth a link—
 A link of love—and earth to raise
 Thereby to heaven our bond of praise?

* * * * *
 Essence of thrush and nightingale,
 Of fluting owl, and all the vale
 Of liquid sounds; like varying stream
 Rushing along from gloom to gleam;
 Like hum of wind in willow tree,
 Like echoes deep in caves of sea;
 Cheering from chastened heights above,
 Pouring from wondrous wells of love!

A flood of fluid soothing oil
 I saw before it storms recoil,
 Crusted reserve fled melted hot,
 And pride its littleness forgot;

A flood of sunlight, green good-will
 To love's full grain I saw it fill;
 And large-eyed love more soft and clear
 With joy thrilled too intense to cheer;
 I felt my heart rush out to men,
 My soul shake free her wings again;
 At home I've given a deeper kiss
 And breathed anew life's settled bliss.

* * * * *

LINES FOR THE SEASON.

Shall Christmas come and New Year go
 And no sweet thoughts between us flow,
 No thoughts as clear as Christmas frost,
 No thoughts as pure as Christmas snow,
 Shall custom's gracious hand be lost?
 This answers, No!

* * * * *

Whoe'er hath harp for chastened taste,
 Whoe'er can make the dancers haste,
 Whoe'er hath balm for age and woe,
 Whoe'er can light the pathless waste,
 Come with your blessings bending low
 And be unlaced!

The season's wish: Be there no want
 Which plenty, out of reach, may taunt:
 For winter's cold may all have heat,
 May daily hunger no one haunt,
 First, social order, these things meet
 Ere grandeur flaunt!

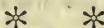
Though but a day, think of a nation
 In one unbroken jubilation;
 Though but a day, there's endless hope
 When each hath touched the other's station,
 We'll cease to slight, we'll cease to mope,
 Cease agitation.

Think of a land, or earth's whole sphere
 In Heaven's appointed course career;
 Straight as a ship let pilot guide,
 And less men tend the lesser gear,
 All bold in love, no shame, no pride,
 Each, each revere!

* * * * *

This time is for beginnings new,
 A pause to breathe and scan the view;
 Grant we may see how fair is all,
 Or clear or veiled in mist and dew;
 That fruit is sweet, though bud was gall,
 If growth be true!

Beginnings new! fling back the past,
 Let all impressions be recast;
 Nurse not reproach for ills of old,
 Nor joys, as though we'd seen the last:
 Erect, eyes on, slip baby's hold;
 Into the vast!



JOHN BROWN.

John Brown was born at Greenhill farm, near Darvel, in the parish of Loudoun, and attended Darvel Public School, afterwards entering the warehouse of Messrs Alexander Morton & Co., Darvel, where he remained eight years, and during which period all his leisure hours were assiduously devoted to reading and self-improvement. When twenty-seven years of age he transferred his services to a commercial house in Glasgow, where he acted as correspondent. A year later he removed to London, where he remained four years with a fine art publishing firm in New Bond Street, leaving to take a voyage to South America for reasons of health. In the Argentine, at the foot of the Andes, he was occupied for a few years in the office of the Great Western Railway Company, and subsequently as secretary to the resident engineer of the Paraguay Central Railway, and he is now in the counting house of this company, with residence in Asuncion. In 1909 he married Gertrude, eldest daughter of the Rev. J. P. Britton, vicar of Lee, Bucks, England. Mr Brown's poems possess the elusive and alluring touch of the true genius. A manuscript volume of his best pieces is now in the hands of a publishing firm, and the author hopes to have them "issued to a waiting world" before the close of another year.

MORNING.

Lo, in the East the eagle sun
 Breaks through the caging bars of night,
 And mocking clouds winged black and dun,
 Drop in the silvern shafted light.

With open breast and flying hair
 The young sea wind comes singing in,
 And up the morning's crystal stair
 The lark goes with his violin.

The daisies pearly lids unfold,
 And blush to feel the grasses press,
 Their dewdrops million mirrors hold
 Deep visions of pure loveliness.

From furtive thought and impulse mean,
 Go we as gods through magic halls,
 With feet that leap to feel the green,
 And hearts that echo cuckoo calls.

THOUGHTS.

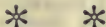
Thoughts that come with the stars,
 And the splendour of night;
 When passions are still, and the soul
 Is attuned to its height.

Naked it stands. The shore
 White with the spume of the tide
 That flows from the footstool of God,
 Is beneath it, and wide

Break the luminous waves.
 For, ever round this earth
 Rolls the sea of the thoughts of God,
 That knows nor death nor birth.

Shakespeare, Browning, and Keats,
 Bathed in that ocean, I
 May catch but a dash of the spray
 And see it go by.

Soft! For even as these
 Shall I be in the day
 When Time has no measure of hours,
 Nor my spirit has clay.



REV, WILLIAM SOMERVILLE REID.

The Rev. William Somerville Reid is a son of the United Free Manse, Hurlford, and is well known outwith the bounds of Ayrshire as an advocate of Christian Socialism, and as a composer of patriotic songs, several of which have been set to appropriate music. Mr Reid was educated for the Church at Edinburgh University, where he was a prize-man in practically all his classes, and received "Honourable Mention" for essays treating of English and Roman literature. He held for a time the appointment of Warden of the Students' Settlement in the Pleasance, Edinburgh, and while there became familiar in some measure with "the still sad music of humanity," which developed his first leanings towards Christian Socialism.

After filling important charges as *locum tenens* in Edinburgh and in Moffat, he was called, in 1901, to be colleague and successor to his father, the late Rev. William Reid, under whom the Free Church of Hurlford was founded in 1859, and after

whom it was named at the time of the Union. Mr Reid has been a regular contributor for several years to magazines and press journals, and is author of a booklet, entitled "Pride of Winter," which had a successful sale.

ELEGY.

On reading of the death of Mr Alexander Anderson, better known as "Surfaceman," the well-known Scottish poet.

A sigh comes frae the sobbin' morn,
And ilka daisy hangs its heid;
The he'rt o' Nature seems forlorn,
As though she kent a frien' was deid.

A' waefu'—she may richtfu' weep
Like a true mither ower her bairn;
His name in faulds o' mem'ry keep,
And big for him some lofty cairn.

A lover true—he lo'ed her lang
And sang her praises sweet and clear,
An' noo the gaet we a' maun gang,
He's gaen, and wi' him simmer's cheer.

The air is balmy wi' the rose,
An' sweet wi' scent o' new-mown hay;
But sweeter is the deep repose
Of him we crown wi' leaves o' bay.

As when the lark at heaven's gate,
Lost in the dazzling depths of blue,
Charms those who on his singing wait,
Though he himself is hid from view.

So Death cannot his name efface;
Still floats on air his song sublime.
Though lowly-born, he has a place
With the immortals of our time.

A SONG OF EMPIRE.

(Empire Day—May 24.)

We were but a feeble people, cradled in our island home,
Whose rocky coasts are braided with the roaring breakers' foam;
But the sea, our kindly mother, suckled us upon her breast,
For, of all the isles she bore, she loved our own the best.

Chorus.

Run up the flag of Empire—let it flutter in the breeze,
On turret-top on mainland, on our ships which plough the seas;
It is dyed red with brave blood shed, and white, without a stain,
With strip of blue, the sea's own hue—Britannia's proud domain.

We were fondled in her arms, and we were dandled on her knee,
And scourged and weather-beaten when the winds blew wild and free;

So we grew to manly vigour, and explored the unknown world,
And on continents and islands our Union Jack unfurled.

She sang us gentle lullabies, and rocked us in our sleep;
She gave us of her thunder, which our monster cannons keep.
We imbibed her mighty spirit, which has made us bold and free,
And like her, burden-bearing out of choice and not for fee.

She has linked us close together with a chain of happy waves;
The mother and the children with encircling arm she saves.
Among peoples past our reckoning, many-coloured, strange of tongue,
Beneath the flag of Union, is our British Anthem sung.

A SCOTTISH DOOMSDAY.

(28th December, 1879-1906.)

A SUNDAY EVENING REVERIE.

I saw the chariots of God
In splendid pomp appear;
Thundering from their dread abode,
They to the earth drew near.

The foremost steeds were snowy white,
Like their own charioteers;
With meteor whip and reins of light,
His coursers, each one steers.

Earth quivered like a golden gong,
For they had reached her rim;
And echoed with the mirth and song
Of gladsome seraphim.

But other steeds like blood were red,
Their hoofs were shod with doom;
For in their wake were piled the dead
And mourners sat in gloom.

Again I marked the glittering host
Deploy and homeward bound;
And souls that earth deplored as lost,
Were in their chariots found.

On, past the outmost stars, they sped,
Where splendours veil the throne;
(Life's darkest riddles there are read—
We know as we are known).

And, lo! a voice was heard to say,
"Doubt not that God is Love,"
Though strange the time and dark the way
He summons some above.

JOHN PARKINSON.

John Parkinson is of Irish descent, but was born in Kilwinning, and worked for a number of years in Busby Spinning Mills. He is not only a student of poetry and writer of serial articles, but has dipped also into the abstruse and problematic waters of mathematics and astronomy. Nature has endowed Mr Parkinson with intellectual gifts of a high order, his success as a poet being in some measure due to Dr Milroy, of Kilwinning, who, perceiving his talents, encouraged him in his studies, and from this (as the poet tells us in his preface to "Lays of Love and War") "his literary efforts received their strongest impulse." Mr Parkinson is the author of a series of twelve articles, entitled the "Sword of Islam," which appeared in the "Ardrossan and Saltcoats Herald," and which were re-published in the "Crescent" and other Islamic journals. Shortly after the publication of this series the author had the pleasure of meeting Abdullah Quilliam Bey, the Sheikh-ul-Islam of the British Isles. This meeting resulted in Mr Parkinson joining the Muslim community at Liverpool and offering the services of his pen to the cause of Islam. Mr Parkinson is the author also of a series of articles on popular astronomy, which appeared in the "Ardrossan Herald" under the *nom de plume* of "Ingomar." When only twenty years of age he was elected a member of the British Astronomical Association, and in 1905, in recognition of his literary services, he was created an officer of the Imperial Order of the Medjidieh by His Imperial Majesty Ghazi Abdul Hamid Khan, Sultan of Turkey.

W. E. HENLEY.

Across the golden orb of day a cloud,
Laden with gloom and death, has passed, in dark eclipse
Involving all the brood of earth. The sunlight gone,
The lesser stars no more encumber'd by his beams,
Nor veiled by his intrinsic brilliancy
Shine forth undimmed.

Henley is dead! no more the noonday glow.
Beyond the western bar, where, daily, suns
Go down, and from the glaring fields of day
Plunge into night, his sun has dipped,
And left behind a sky, lit with the glory of the afterglow.

The world has lost a man,
Whose mighty bosom, filled with love, awoke
A chord in every sentient heart, and sent
Vibrations pulsing deep through all the realms

Of thought—a soul whose passion flights arose
Thro' regions higher than the stars and pour'd
An incense far sublimer than the breath
Of flowers, and clouds, and beating suns,

O! Death,
Why do you take away our men from us,
And leave but weak homunculi behind?
So storms sweep through the heart of woods and tear
The forest giants down; that weaker trees
May drink the sap that gave the monarchs Life.

Ye winds along the bosom of the world
Breathe soft and low your lulling gentle airs.
Ye seas, your waves no longer beat upon
The burning sands of day; but moaning low,
Lisp softly on the harbour bar of night.

O, moon and stars, ye lamps of heaven that blaze
O'er all the sepulchres of earth, your veil
Of silver lawn cast sweetly o'er his couch,
And chant his funeral march. Ye clouds distil
Fresh dews. Ye flowers, shed balmy nectars round
The tomb wherein the sleeper lies. Ye men,
Twine wreaths of amaranth. Henley is dead.

THE SLEEPING SENORA.

Hark! the morning breezes sighing:
Wake, my dearest love, awake,
That the sweetest zephyr blowing
May thy raven tresses shake!
Wake, my love, for high Nevada's
Everlasting crown of snow
Hails the morning's ardent kisses
With a beauteous, chiding glow.

O'er thy pillow's snowy whiteness
Dark Silurian tresses spread,
Black as stormy clouds in winter
Beating fiercely overhead.
Lift, my love, thy drooping eyelash,
Andalusia's sunny hue,
Darker than our skies at midnight,
Darker than their deepest blue.

Wake, my love, the sunshine glitters
On Alhambra's ruined tower,
Sparkles on that crumbling remnant
Of the ancient Moorish power.
Wake, my love, for thund'ring Douro
Now reflects the golden gleam,
Flashing onward through Granada,
Like some fleeting, fairy dream.

I can see the Moorish blood drift
 Shining thro' each dark'ning vein;
 Dyeing deep each languid eye-lid,
 Oh! Senora, child of Spain.
 Wake, my love, the myrtle's waving
 In the court of Albacin;
 Wake, my love, my dark-eyed maiden;
 Oh! awake, thou Granadine!

Shall the buds upon thy bosom
 Fairest fruit in secret shed?
 Soon may balmy lips of morning
 Warm them with a loving red.
 Wake, my love, we must be going,
 Where the silver Xeniel flows;
 Where the Cypress stands in glory,
 And the Orange blossom blows.

EXTRACT FROM THE "SONS OF ISLAM."

"Sing Taric's name,
 His spotless fame,
 Of Islam's chivalry the boast;
 On sunny plain,
 Of Southern Spain,
 He overthrew the Gothic host.

They stood at bay
 Till seventh day,
 Both king and knight in armour bright,
 Ran thro' their hands,
 The flowing sands,
 The glowing sands of life and light.

The lances flash,
 The armies crash,
 The swinging ph'lanx the thund'ring shock;
 The ringing shield,
 The stricken field,
 The battle shout, they crash and rock.

Both Prince and Knight
 With vassal might,
 In ghastly ranks of death they lay;
 The blood of lord
 Imbrued the sword,
 When set the sun that stormy day."

Book III.

RESIDENT POETS PAST AND PRESENT.

Book III.

RESIDENT POETS' PART AND PRESENT.

REV. WILLIAM PEEBLES, D.D.

Not a few of the resident poets of Ayrshire have lived a sufficient number of years in the land of their adoption to warrant them a place alongside the native poets. Bound up as they are by countless ties of affection and friendship the shire has become as dear to them as that of their nativity. It was felt, therefore, that a work of this kind would have been incomplete without some reference being made to them and to the associations by which their names and memories will always be linked with the county of Ayr.

Among the earliest resident poets of special note is the Rev. Dr William Peebles, who figures in "The Kirk's Alarm" and other effusions of our National Poet.

If Robert Burns had written nothing better than "The Kirk's Alarm," he might have been considered a very indifferent poet indeed, and Scotland would probably have conferred on some other minstrel the proud title of "National Poet." "The Kirk's Alarm," however, if it shows no marvellous flight of fancy, is of much interest inasmuch as it contains a portrait gallery of contemporary divines, in which Dr Peebles figures as "Poet Willie" and as "Peebles o' the water-fit." This good divine held rigidly orthodox views, and when his brother-divine, Dr M'Gill, of Ayr, spread consternation and dire apprehension through the camp of Calvinistic believers, Dr Peebles came forth as a strong man armed and championed the cause of "The Auld Lichts." The doctrine promulgated by Dr M'Gill through the pulpit and the publishing of so-called heretical essays created no small stir in local circles and came to the knowledge of Burns, who in the following lines urged Dr Peebles to the fray:—

"Poet Willie, Poet Willie,
Gie the Doctor a volley."

The matter ended, however, without any serious results, or schisms in the congregations concerned.

As a poet Dr Peebles was by no means indifferent, but, unfortunately, in a single line of one of his published poems he allowed a gross contradiction of idioms to appear. Burns seized on this defect, held it up to ridicule, and the poetic reputation of the divine suffered accordingly. Dr Peebles died in 1826, after being upwards of forty years minister of Newton-upon-Ayr. In his earlier poetic compositions he aspired after "the gentle sweetness of Parnell and the amiable simplicity of Goldsmith."

THE FORSAKEN SHEPHERD.

Hail kindred glooms! Ye sable shades of night!
 Shroud every beauty from my aching sight;
 Ye silent groves! no more the sound retain
 To soothe the sorrows of the pensive swain!

And ye, my sheep! who oft engaged my care,
 Go, bleat wild music to the midnight air!
 Ye silver waters, as ye roll along,
 Bear the sad burden of my mournful song!
 Ye gentle breezes, as ye louder rise,
 Waft far and wide the whisper of my sighs!
 Ye seats of pastoral innocence and ease,
 Where all was smiling joy, if aught could please!
 And ye sweet fields and lawns of verdant hue,
 My native home, and every hope, adieu!

I'll seek some distant, solitary shore,
 And there to flinty rocks my loss deplore;
 The roaring winds shall aid my hopeless strain,
 While foaming surges swell the sounding main.
 There oft to calm the sorrows of my mind,
 Mem'ry shall haunt these scenes I left behind,
 And oft to lull my wearied soul to rest,
 Shall love recall her image to my breast.

In stronger measure than the above lines the good Doctor signifies his displeasure of the state of affairs existing in his country when the Highlanders were being driven out of their shielings and compelled to emigrate to foreign lands. Caledonia—"a female form supremely bright"—unveils her grandeur, and as she beholds the clansmen hunted from their glens and straths she thus complains:—

Shall these, my sons, unpitied and forlorn,
 Be doomed as exiles o'er the world to roam;
 From their dear fields and verdant valleys torn,
 Seek the mean shelter of a distant home?

Shall they, the offspring of a warlike race,
 Endure the pangs the wretched only know;
 And folded close in penury's embrace,
 Feel all the sad variety of woe?

Was it for this, with noble ardour fir'd,
 Fought their bold fathers on the hostile plain?
 For this, the Hero conquer'd or expir'd,
 While Roman legions urg'd their course in vain?

Will no kind Patriot stem the threat'ning tide,
 Restore my honours and espouse my cause;
 Check the curs'd reign of insolence and pride,
 And nobly free them from oppression's laws?

If no kind Patriot, with a hero's zeal,
 The injur'd rights of Liberty restore;
 Ah, me! I too must bid these plains farewell,
 And Caledonia's name be known no more.

* *

JAMES FISHER.

James Fisher was a blind fiddler who belonged to the Borders of Galloway and lived many years in Ochiltree. He is remembered on account of several poetic effusions which he addressed to Tom Walker, the rhyming tailor of Ochiltree, and in which Burns comes in for a fair share of caustic criticism. The following specimen verses will suffice—thus Fisher to Walker:—

“Wow, man! ye hae some unco turns!
 I heard some things ye sent to Burns
 In whilk ye gie him gey ill purns
 To red, I think;
 But what they were my muse adjourns
 To tell distinct.

Ye're no like some that I could name,
 To please the wicked mak' their theme;
 But Tam, what tho' they raise their fame
 Amang that race?
 They in the main are unco lame
 When scant o' grace.

To this effusion Walker replied in a long poetical epistle, which he wound up as follows:—

“Saints now-a-days may weep an' mourn,
 To think how ages yet unborn,
 Will see religion turned to scorn
 By Robin's books,
 An' a' the Bible reft an' torn
 By clergy folks.”

Fisher was author of two prose booklets, noticed in our Bibliographical Index.

* *

GAVIN TURNBULL.

The poetical effusions of Gavin Turnbull, who was born on the banks of “Silver Tweed,” attracted the notice of Robert Burns, and the two poets subsequently became fast friends.

Turnbull's early years were spent in Kilmarnock, where he worked for a time at the trade of carpet weaving. Later in life he embraced the stage as a profession, and was playing in Dumfries Theatre on several occasions at the time when Burns followed the calling of exciseman there.

Turnbull issued two volumes of his own musings, which give evidence of considerable lyrical power.

MYRA.

The forests are mantled in green,
 The hawthorn in blossom looks gay,
 The primrose and daisy are seen,
 And birds carol sweet on the spray.
 'Tis now the gay season of love,
 Soft raptures inspire ev'ry heart;
 Come, Myra, retire to the grove,
 While I my fond passion impart.

You say that you doubt if I love;
 From whence can such fancies arise?
 If words are too languid to prove,
 'Tis seen in the glance of mine eyes.
 Believe me, thou charmer divine,
 Those valleys can witness my pain;
 The streams join their murmurs with mine
 And the echoes have learn'd to complain.

I'm young and too simple to lie,
 To call thee a goddess or queen;
 My flame is revealed in that sigh,
 My blushes explain what I mean.
 My passion's so mild, and sincere,
 And chaste as the innocent dove;
 I call thee not false nor severe,
 'Tis sure the completest of love.

I walk by the whispering grove,
 Where the zephyrs sound soft thro' the spray;
 I mourn with the amorous dove,
 And join the sweet nightingale's lay.
 Those sounds are so mournfully sweet,
 That mirth seems unpleasant to me;
 I'd leave the fond thought with regret
 Of indulging a passion for thee.

I lie by the verge of the stream,
 Whose murmurs oft lull me to rest;
 I court the kind, flattering dream,
 To lay me supine on thy breast.
 I wake, and I fold thee in vain,
 The shade is too subtle to keep;
 I foolishly dote on my pain,
 And find it a pleasure to weep.

The pleasures that wait on the spring,
 The flow'rs and the fair budding tree,
 The joys that the summer can bring,
 Are tasteless when absent from thee:
 The warblers that sing from the grove,
 In vain do their melodies flow;
 But when with the maid that I love,
 'Tis enchantment wherever I go.

I covet not jewels and gold;
 The rich I unenvied can see;
 No treasure on earth I behold,
 No jewel so precious as thee!
 With me to my cottage retire,
 Unburthen'd with treasure and wealth;
 Let love all our pleasures inspire,
 And live in contentment and health.



REV. JOHN DUN.

It must be confessed that Burns with his satirical writings and fearless criticisms created not a little flutter and stir in the clerical camps of his district and period. The lash of his scorn fell witheringly severe on the backs of several worthy divines, and it was only natural that some retaliation would be forthcoming. Perhaps the sorest counterblast came from the pen of the Rev. John Dun, of Auchinleck, who was a minor poet as well as a preacher, and who issued in 1790 a volume of his sermons, to which were appended a few specimens of his musings in verse. The following is amusing enough, and being a poetical javelin aimed at the credentials of the greater bard it is interesting apart from any merit or demerit that may appertain to the effusion as poetry. The lines are entitled:—

THE DEIL'S ANSWER TO HIS VERRA FRIEND, ROBERT BURNS.

So, zealous Robin, stout an' fell—
 True champion for the cause of Hell—
 Thou beats the righteous down pell-mell—
 Sae from an' forthy,
 That o' a seat where Devils dwell
 There's nane mair worthy

Gif thou gang on the gate thou's gaun,
 Ilk fearless fiend shall by thee stan',
 That bows aneath my high comman':
 Sae, be nae frightet,
 For I shall send my helpin' han'
 To see thee rightet.

Thou does as weel's could be expectit
 O' ane wha's wit lay lang neglected,
 Some godly folk your rhyme I trow
 Ca' worthless blether;
 But be na fear't, ye's get your due
 When we forgether.

Sae fear't I'm for the gospel gun:
 To see my frien's I canna win;
 But tell sic chieles as you, my son,
 I'll see them soon,
 An' thee, an' me's hae curious fun
 Ere a' be done.

The Endor Witch wha liv'd lang syne
 Was a richt honest freen o' mine,
 An' Haman, wha in tale shall shine
 For zeal an' spite;
 But nane o' them did feats like thine
 In black and white.

As Judas, too, richt bauld an' leal,
 Wha served wi' perfect heart the Deil,
 An' play'd his part I'm sure as weel
 As ony breathing;
 Till ance he hanged himsel' puir chiel,
 But that was naething.

In Hell when I read owre your sang,
 Where rhymes cam' thund'rin' wi' a bang,
 Quoth I, trouth I's see Rab or lang,
 An' that's be seen,
 Giff Nick should on me ride the stang
 To Aberdeen.

Now, Rab, my lad, cheer up thy saul,
 In Goschen thou shalt tent thy faul,
 An' giff thou's aye as stout an' baul
 As I'm a Deil,
 Thou's no give up till thou's right aul',
 Sae fare thee weel.

Mr Dun was a native of Dumfriesshire, and was presented in the year 1751 to the charge of Auchinleck parish by Alexander Boswell, Lord Auchinleck, in whose family he previously had been a tutor.



WILLIAM HALBERT.

It would appear that the "Dominie Samsons" of the eighteenth century were very much addicted to the misdeed of making poetry, and in their leisure hours to "wander in Nature's

garden fair and pick up blooms of beauty here and there." William Halbert was the parish schoolmaster of Auchinleck, and was not only a poet but in many other ways a most remarkable man. He was the author of a very ingenious treatise on arithmetic, which he published, and which contained a number of curious, original, and most abstruse problems, a number of them in rhyme. This treatise continued in use in some of the schools for a number of years after the author's death.

Mr Halbert was the composer of a rather lengthy adulatory poem on the death of Lord Auchinleck in 1782.



JANET LITTLE.

Janet Little, known as the "Scottish Milkmaid," was the daughter of a cottar in Nether Bogside, near Ecclefechan. In early life she entered the service of the Rev. Mr Johnstone, in whose family she remained several years. On leaving his service she was engaged by Mrs Dunlop of Dunlop, the patroness and correspondent of Burns. Whilst serving at Dunlop House she had access to a copy of Burns's book of poems, and the perusal of same seems to have fanned her poetic flame, for on removing subsequently to Loudoun Castle, as dairymaid to Mrs Hendrie, daughter of Mrs Dunlop, she addressed a poetic letter to Burns, who about this time had removed to Ellisland. Burns mentioned the circumstance in a letter to Mrs Dunlop, where he styles the epistle "a very ingenious but modest composition, part poetic and part prosaic," adding that he had heard of Janet Little in Dumfriesshire.

Janet eventually became the wife of John Richmond, but as she had no family she continued to work as dairymaid at Loudoun Castle till almost the day of her death, which occurred after twenty-four hours' illness. She was interred in the old burying-ground at Loudoun Kirk.

When on a visit at one time to her parents at Ecclefechan she called at Ellisland, and there learned that the Poet had sustained a broken arm on account of his horse stumbling when returning from an excise excursion. This incident she recorded in the following strain :—

ON A VISIT TO MR BURNS.

Is't true? or does some magic spell
 My wond'ring eyes beguile?
 Is this the place where deigns to dwell
 The honour of our isle?

The charming Burns, the Muses' care,
Of all her sons the pride;
This pleasure oft I've sought to share,
But been as oft denied.

Oft have my thoughts at midnight hour
To him excursion made;
This bliss in dreams was premature,
And with my slumbers fled.

'Tis real now, no vision here
Bequeaths a poignant dart;
I'll view the poet ever dear
Whose lays have charm'd my heart.

Hark! now he comes, a dire alarm
Re-echoes through his hall;
Pegasus kneeled, his rider's arm
Was broken by a fall.

The doleful tidings to my ears
Were in harsh notes convey'd;
His lovely wife stood drown'd in tears,
While thus I pondering said—

“No cheering draught, with ills unmix'd,
Can mortal taste below;
All human fate by Heaven is fix'd,
Alternate joy and woe;

With beating breast I view'd the Bard;
All trembling did him greet,
With sighs bewail'd his fate so hard
Whose notes were ever sweet.”

As it may interest many to know what the Scottish Milk-maid thought of Burns, as a poet, we transcribe the poetical part of her epistle to the Bard of Ellisland.

Fair fa' the honest rustic swain,
The pride o' a' our Scottish plain;
Thou gies us joy to hear thy strain,
And notes sae sweet;
Old Ramsay's shade revived again
In thee we greet.

Loved Thalia, that delightful muse,
Seem'd lang shut up as a recluse;
To all she did her aid refuse
Since Allan's day,
Till Burns arose, then did she choose
To grace his lay.

To hear thy sang all ranks desire,
Sae weel ye strike the dormant lyre;
Apollo with poetic fire
Thy breast does warm,
And critics silently admire
Thy art to charm.

Cæsar and Luath weel can speak,
 'Tis pity e'er their gabs should steek,
 But into human nature keek,
 And knots unravel;
 To hear their lectures once a week,
 Nine miles I'd travel.

Thy dedication to G. H.,
 An unco bonnie hamespun speech,
 Wi' winsome glee the heart can teach
 A better lesson,
 Than servile bards who fan and fleech
 Like beggar's messan.

When slighted love becomes your theme,
 And woman's faithless vows you blame,
 With so much pathos you exclaim
 In your Lament:
 But glanced by the most rigid dame,
 She would relent.

The daisy, too, ye sing wi' skill,
 And weel ye praise the whisky gill!
 In vain I blunt my feckless quill
 Your fame to raise:
 While Echo sounds from ilka hill
 To Burns's praise.

Did Addison or Pope but hear,
 Or Sam, that critic most severe,
 A ploughboy sing with throat sae clear,
 They in a rage
 Their works would a' in pieces tear
 And curse your page.

Sure Milton's eloquence were faint
 The beauties of your verse to paint,
 My rude, unpolished strokes but taint
 Their brilliancy;
 Th' attempt would doubtless vex a saint,
 And weel may thee.

The task I'll drop—with heart sincere,
 To Heaven present my humble pray'r,
 That all the blessings mortals share
 May be by turns
 Dispensed by an indulgent care
 To Robert Burns!

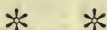
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JAMES HYSLOP.

James Hyslop, author of the "Covenanter's Dream," was in early life associated with the uplands of Ayrshire, being engaged for a time as a shepherd at Dalblair, where Richard

Cameron and other covenanters encountered and were captured by the red-handed troopers. Hyslop is thus known as "The Muirkirk Shepherd." He was born in Crawick Glen, near Sanquhar, and after the publication of the poem by which his name is best remembered he was offered and accepted an appointment as tutor on board the man-of-war vessel "Doris." On completing a three years' cruise he visited London, and made the acquaintance of several literary magnates, who installed him as a reporter on the staff of the "London Times," and afterwards as headmaster of an Academy in the vicinity of London.

In the twenty-ninth year of his age he once more accepted an appointment as tutor on board of a man-of-warship, and sailed with it for the Cape of Good Hope, but on the voyage he contracted a malignant fever, which carried him off, and thus the harp of James Hyslop, the Muirkirk Shepherd, was for ever silenced. An edition of his works was published a few years ago with biography from the pen of the Rev. Peter Mearns, of Coldstream.



REV. DAVID LANDSBOROUGH.

For the Rev. David Landsborough, natural grandeur and wild romantic scenery such as is to be seen in his native parish of Dalry, Galloway, had a never-failing attraction, and not infrequently roused him to poetical emotion. While studying for the ministry he held the appointment of tutor in the family of Lord Glenluce, and eventually was ordained to the charge of Stevenston Parish. From his manse windows in Stevenston his eye could sweep the Firth of Clyde and rest on the sun-gilded peaks of Arran, and this magnificent seascape, together with frequent visits which he made to Arran, were doubtless the inductive sources of his lengthy blank-verse poem on the beautiful western isle which dominates the Firth of Clyde. Mr Landsborough also contributed poetical pieces to the pages of the "Scottish Christian Herald" and other periodicals.

A SABBATH MORNING IN ARRAN.

With cheerful light shone forth the smiling sun,
 When came the Sabbath morn of holy rest.
 All Nature rested on that blessed morn;
 Not with the listlessness of torpid sloth,
 But beaming peace, as if that morn restored
 Part of that joy which brightened Nature's face
 When the Creator cast upon his works
 A look benignant, and pronounced them good.

Rested the sea—yet did the sea proclaim
 Her tranquil bliss, as she return'd the smile
 Diffused on her from Heaven's propitious eye.
 Rested the winds—and yet the zephyrs bland
 Whisper'd their happiness in accents sweet;
 Or held soft converse with the peaceful waves
 Which play'd in gentlest rippings on the shore.
 Rested the fleecy clouds on mountain tops—
 And yet the clouds prepared to fade away,
 And leave in spotless purity the sky.
 Rested the village neat; and all around
 The humble house of God was calm repose,
 The sweet tranquillity of Sabbath morn.



REV. GEORGE PAXTON.

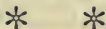
The Rev. George Paxton, author of a volume entitled "The Villager and Other Poems," was Secession Church minister of Kilmaurs from 1789 till 1807. In 1808 he was appointed Professor of Divinity in Edinburgh. In Kilmaurs he succeeded "Father Smeaton," who is referred to by Burns in a letter to Miss Chalmers.

A popular tradition of how Rowallan Castle derived its name is made the subject of Mr Paxton's muse in verses addressed to the Carmel Water:—

A Scottish chief in days of old,
 As hoary-headed sires have told,
 Was tossed upon the main:
 Small was the skiff, the tempest blew,
 The trembling chieftain urged the crew
 The distant shore to gain.

"Row! Allan, row!" the baron cried,
 "High on the foaming surges ride
 And bear me safe to shore:
 A rich domain on Carmel side
 O'er hill and dale extending wide,
 Is there for evermore."

The quivering oar bold Allan stretched,
 The solid land the Baron reached,
 And Allan won the prize;
 Adorned with ropes of twisted stone
 Long on thy banks Rowallan shone
 And still the storm defies.



THOMAS BROWN.

Thomas Brown, sometime proprietor of Lanfine estate in the parish of Galston, was the son of a medical practitioner in Glasgow, and a nephew of the celebrated Lord Jeffrey. He had the advantages of a University education, and studied for the Scottish Bar, but never engaged in legal practice. Mr Brown's muse is not of the homely order, as he was fond of dressing his thoughts in classical garments. Although living in close retirement at Lanfine, he and his sisters were nevertheless mindful of the needs of their less fortune-favoured neighbours, and performed many charitable deeds in a quiet way. They founded for the benefit of those residing in Galston, Newmilns, and Darvel a Reading and Recreation Institute in each of the three towns.

THE LEGEND OF ST. ROSALIE.

[Rosalie was the niece of William the Good, who reigned in Sicily in the Pontificate of Celestine III. She mysteriously disappeared from a convent, where, though not a professed nun, she resided. Three hundred years afterwards remains, believed to be hers, were found on Mount Pelegrino, near Palermo, of which city she is the patron saint. The scene is laid in the nunnery of Cefalu, on the northern coast of Sicily. Mon Gibello is the popular name of Etna.]

Softly ceased the vesper bell,
The anthem died away,
And Rosalie has sought her cell,
To watch, to weep, to pray.

She slept, she dreamt: Palermo's shore
All torchlit seemed to be;
And galleys rode in triumph o'er
The blue Sicilian sea.

"By Rome's high Pontiff sent to thee,
This royal crown is thine;
He hails thee Queen of Sicily,
And Queen of Palestine.

"Wake, Princess, rise! relinquish all,
And quit this vestal shrine,
Should cloister'd Cefalu enthrall
That captive soul of thine?"

And Baron bold and lady bright
Knelt; but they sued in vain.

"O why," she cried, "should fiends of night
Assume an angel strain?"

"Since thou wilt spurn our 'broider'd pall
 Nor wear our proffered crown,
 We bring a nobler coronal
 A fairer garland down.

"Agnese's faith, Lucia's fame,
 Are poor compared with thine;
 And brighter lamps than theirs shall flame
 Around thy holier shrine.

The God inflicts no martyr's doom,
 Exacts no life of pain"—
 The dreamer cried, "Can fiends assume
 An angel's rapturous strain?"

While solemn notes of music fell
 'Midst mystic radiance dim;
 "Alas, she sighed, "that fiends of hell
 Can mock an angel's hymn!"

"The moor! the moor! the spear! the sword!
 The blazing torch they bring;
 They spoil the altar of the Lord,
 And basely slay the King.

"Beside him saintly Celestine
 Lies pale and mangled there,
 His heart's blood sprinkles Peter's shrine,
 And stains the world's tiare."

Earth reels and totters to and fro;
 In sulphurous lightning blue
 Gibello's fiery torrents flow
 On shatter'd Cefalu."

"The Temple's veil is rent in twain,
 Hell riots uncontrolled:
 The wolf he has the shepherd slain,
 And rages in the fold.

"Fly, while the way for flight is clear,
 Ere sorcerous hordes pursue.
 Away! there is no shelter here
 In outraged Cefalu."

Softly chimed the matin bell;
 She knelt not in the fane;
 They searched the cloister and the cell
 For Rosalie in vain.

Three hundred silent years come round:
 The legend scarce was known;
 When shepherds on the mountain found
 A whiten'd skeleton.

They read engraven on the rock,
 O'ergrown with mosses grey—
 "Oh why should fiends of darkness mock
 A seraph's holy lay?"

LADY FLORA ELIZABETH HASTINGS.

Ayrshire cannot claim the gifted Lady Flora Hastings as a native; neither can the mere trickery of chance debar us from cherishing her memory as such, for in respect of family ties and life-long associations her interests were ever closely identified with Ayrshire. She was the eldest daughter of Lord Moira, afterwards created Viscount Loudoun, Earl of Rawdon, and Marquis of Hastings, who was in succession a Privy Councillor, Master of the Ordnance, Constable of the Tower, and Governor-General of Bengal and Commander-in-Chief of the Forces in India. He and his Countess were the hero and heroine of Tannahill's famous song, "Loudoun's Bonnie Woods and Braes." Their daughter Flora was born at Edinburgh, February, 1806, and spent her early years at Loudoun Castle. She was appointed Lady of the Bedchamber to the Duchess of Kent, mother of the late Queen Victoria, and this position she held till her untimely death at Buckingham Palace on the 5th of July, 1839.

A volume of her poems was published by Messrs Blackwood in 1840, edited by her sister, Lady Sophia, who afterwards became the Marchioness of Bute, the proceeds of the volume being devoted to the erection of a girls' school in Newmilns as a memorial of her lamented sister, the poetess of the Loudoun family.

Lady Flora was a gifted musician as well as a poetess, and her harp, although long unstrung, is still preserved in Loudoun Castle. As a poetess she ranks high among the minstrels of Ayrshire, her style being accomplished and dignified.

Her apostrophe to Loudoun Hill has been frequently quoted. It forms part of a poem entitled "Farewell, my Home," in which the allusions to local scenes show that Lady Flora never forgot the home of her early childhood.

APOSTROPHE TO LOUDOUN HILL.

And thou, dark hill and hoar,
That broodest like a genius o'er the strath,
Passionless witness of the lapse of ages—
And monument, by nature's hand uprear'd,
Of the stern struggles of an earnest time

Even so thou stood'st, when winding round thy base,
Through the wild forests over-arching gloom,
The Roman led his legions. Thus thy brow
Raised from the misty clouds its awful form,
When Bruce and Scotland stemm'd the warlike pride
Of the first Edward's southern chivalry.

And there was yet an hour more deeply fraught
 With fervid feeling—on thy storm-rived crest
 Stood they who turn'd the sickle to a sword,
 And grasp'd, with hands to pastoral toils inured,
 Th' unwonted weapon in the holiest cause
 For which man hath stood forth a combatant—
 The cause of conscience and of liberty.

Smile not, O sons of these pacific times!
 When, free to worship even as ye list,
 Ye think upon the motley mustering
 Of those who, for the holy Covenant,
 The Church by Scotland sanction'd and approved,
 Even from this rock descending with one voice
 Raised to the Lord of Armies one loud psalm,
 And on the bloody heather of Drumclog
 Pour'd forth their blood to seal their faith thereby.

* * * * *

STANZAS—WRITTEN FOR MUSIC.

I.

Thou speakest in thunders, and Thy throne
 Is girt with seraph legions, on whose wings
 Thou flyest, Lord, opening the sweet springs
 Of the vast ocean: the pestilence goes forth,
 Wasting the nations: and at thy command,
 The astonished earth trembles from zone to zone;
 The treasures of the everlasting north
 Cast forth the ice of ages: Mighty God!
 Who may abide the chastening of Thy rod?
 O Thou Most Holy!

II.

Thou speakest, Father, to the contrite soul
 In the still night, and like soft falling dew
 The voice of pardon sinks upon the ear;
 For thou didst once, to ransom and renew
 The spirits sunk beneath the fiend's control
 Leave Thy bless'd seat above the starry sphere,
 O Thou Most Merciful!

III

Lord! Thou shalt come—the nations shall adore thee,
 Triumphant victim, victor sacrifice!
 Sin and the gluttoned grave shall bend before thee;
 The dead shall hear—Thy people shall arise;
 When Thou shalt bind Thy sheaves in that Thy day.
 Cast not, O Lord! our trembling souls away,
 Thou hast sustained our faith through every ill;
 In Thine own hour be Thou our Refuge still,
 O Thou Most Faithful.

THE SWAN SONG.

Grieve not that I die young. Is it not well
 To pass away ere life hath lost its brightness?
 Bind me no longer, sisters, with the spell
 Of love and your kind words. List ye to me,
 Here I am blessed—but I would be more free:
 I would go forth in all my spirit's lightness.
 Let me depart!

Ah! who would linger till bright eyes grow dim,
 Kind voices mute, and faithful bosoms cold?
 Till carking care, and toil, and anguish grim,
 Cast their dark shadows o'er this fairy world;
 Till fancy's many-coloured wings are furled,
 And all, save the proud spirit, waxeth old?
 I would depart.

Thus would I pass away—yielding my soul
 A joyous thankoffering to Him who gave
 That soul to be, those starry orbs to roll.
 Thus—thus exultingly would I depart,
 Song on my lips, ecstasy in my heart.
 Sisters—sweet sisters, bear me to my grave—
 Let me depart!



MRS COUSIN.

Mrs Cousin, whose maiden name was Anne Ross Cundell, will long be remembered as the authoress of the beautiful hymn, "The sands of time are sinking." Her father, Dr David Ross Cundell, was a medical officer in the army, who, after his retiral from this position, settled in Leith, and carried on a private practice there. In 1849 Miss Cundell became the wife of the Rev. William Cousin, minister of a Scottish congregation at Chelsea, and afterwards of the Free Church in Irvine. During her residence of about ten years in Irvine Mrs Cousin wrote many of her most popular hymns, and among others that world-wide favourite, "The sands of time are sinking," which was suggested by the last words of Samuel Rutherford.

This piece appeared along with some other of her poems in a small volume of verse printed for private circulation. In 1849 Mr Cousin accepted a call to the Free Church of Melrose, where he ministered successfully for about 18 years, at the end of which time he retired with his wife and family to Edinburgh.

Mrs Cousin holds a high and honourable place among the resident poets of Ayrshire.

THE CALL OF BEAUTY.

Beauty is calling on my soul—

The beauty of the morn,
From out the dark still depth of night
The breathing day is born.
The sun has drunk the dew of stars
Off heaven's azure field,
And the rich fount of summer light
Is lavishly unsealed.

Gladness is in the sound of streams,
The bird's clear, throbbing trill,
The voiceful stir of waking homes,
The woodland's breezy thrill.
Across the hill's stern shoulder thrown
There floats a hazy sheen,
And these, glad Morning! from of old
Thy goings forth have been.

Beauty is calling on my soul—

The beauty of the noon,
With noiseless fall of blossom showers
And bees' low drowsy tune.
The sun sits despot in the south,
Wielding his sceptre ray,
And all the vassal streams flash up
His glories on their way.

Wide rolls the shining sea of beams:
A languid splendour steeps
The hills, the city, and the plains;
All nature toils or sleeps.
O lordly noon, thy burning eye
Too fervid glows—too free!
Earth pants beneath thy breathless spell
And cannot hide from thee.

Beauty is calling on my soul—

The beauty of the eve,
The skies have scarcely gathered pearls
Her coronet to weave:
And yet she glides, unchallenged queen,
To mount her silent throne,
Trailing her robe of lustrous fringe
And makes the world her own.

Beneath her sway the forests wear

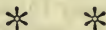
A gloom of purple brown;
Tired earth seems grateful in her sleep
That the fierce sun is down.
The west is like a temple dim
Whose altar stands unfed;
Whose dusky doors are left to close
Because the god is dead.

Beauty is calling on my soul—

The beauty of the night,
Its shades more softly penetrate
Than goodliest pomps of light.

The moon roams like a pilgrim
 Locked in a trance divine,
 Who on a trackless waste has lost
 Her pathway to the shrine.

Beneath spreads fair mysterious light,
 Earth shimmers like a dream—
 The white soul of the daylight world—
 All things so hallowed seem.
 And earth and I are sailing east
 Over a sea unknown,
 Among the myriad barks of light,
 Watched from God's unseen throne.



REV. DR NORMAN MACLEOD.

Norman Macleod, the well-known editor and founder of "Good Words," was a resident of Ayrshire for about five years, his first pastoral charge being the parish of Loudoun. Whilst residing in the manse of Loudoun, Newmilns (historical also on account of its association with Robert Burns and the Rev. Dr Lawrie), he composed many of the tales and sketches which first appeared from his pen in "Good Words" and afterwards in book form. His political leanings being Conservative he gloried in arguing politics with the red-hot Radical weavers of Newmilns, and had at times good-naturedly to own himself worsted in the argument. Dr Macleod's various appointments after severing his connection with the parish of Loudoun are well known. He is better known as a preacher and prose-writer than a poet, but there is ample evidence that he possessed the gift of a skilled lyrist, pathos being the master chord of his harp.

"OH, IT'S HARD TO DIE FRAE HAME."

(From "Good Words," 1861.)

The evening sun is shining noo
 On bonnie Lochanside,
 And to the byre are creeping doon
 The kye, my mither's pride;
 The weans are sporting on the green,
 I see things just the same
 As if amang them a' mysel'—
 Oh, it's hard to die frae hame!

I see the house—the loch—the burn
 The boat lying on the shore;
 My faither working in the yaird,
 My mither round the door;

The cradle rocking by the fire,
That burns a bleezing flame,
And Jeanie singing to the bairn—
Oh, it's hard to die frae hame!

To keep my faither in his craft
I left to win a fee,
And many a tear it cost us baith,
For I was young and wee;
I'm fear'd he'll break his tender heart,
And think he was to blame,
Gin I could only grip his han'—
Oh, it's hard to die frae hame!

My ain dear mither little kens
Her Mary is sae ill,
For 'tween us there's a weary gate,
O' stormy sea and hill;
And will I never see her face,
Or hear her speak my name,
Or clasp my arms about her neck?—
Oh, it's hard to die frae hame!

I thank ye a' beside me here
For the love ye've shown to me,
Ye've gi'en me meat, ye've gi'en me claes,
And gi'en a gentle fee!
To think o't mak's my heart grow grit,
And mak's me feel like shame;
But yet—forgi'e me if I say't—
Oh, it's hard to die frae hame!

And when ye write to tell our folk
How Mary gaed awa',
Be sure ye tell them how I thocht
And thocht about them a';
And tell them, too, I gaed in peace,
Because I kent the Name
O' a Faither and a Brother dear—
Farewell! I'm noo gaun hame!

* *

GEORGE PAULIN.

George Paulin, who for upwards of thirty years held the appointment of Rector of Irvine Academy, was gifted with no common measure of the divine afflatus. Shortly before retiring from the Profession of which he was a distinguished member he issued a volume of musings, entitled "Hallowed Ground, and other Poems," and in which are not a few gems of verse.

The following exquisite lines, written shortly after the death of the Rev. Dr Robertson, Trinity Church, Irvine, appeared in the "Christian Leader":—

W. B. R.

A tale has been told and a life-song sung,
 A life-battle fought on the hills of Time,
 A harp of rich music on earth unstrung
 Hath left its last note to an echo sublime;
 And the soul that was soothed by its magic weeps
 In the shade where the spirit of melody sleeps.

The wounded dove of the terebinth tree
 Hath plained its last plaint in the starlight lone;
 The honey of Hybla forsaken, the bee
 To glades of a sweeter contentment hath flown;
 Sweet spirit of song that didst hallow the shell
 By the brooks of the willows we bid thee farewell.

Farewell to the deep mellow tones—to the eye
 Illumined by thought—to the eloquent face;
 To the heart on the lip-quiver seeming to lie;
 To the rainbow-like gleamings of genius and grace;
 Farewell to the grand, solemn glory of thought,
 Like a wave to Time's shore, from Eternity brought.

THE POET'S EDUCATION.

He watched with joy the brightening tints upon the rose's crest,
 The rich blue deepening upon the violet's lovely breast,
 The opening bosom of the pink, his mother's favourite lily,
 And—sweetest pledge of summer hours—the smiling daffodilly;
 He gazed upon the dancing leaves as mute but living things,
 In breeze and sunshine fluttering, with glorious glancing wings,
 For the pale young snowdrop's early death he felt young friendship's
 grief,
 And mourned an old acquaintance in sere Autumn's faded leaf.
 The robin knew his gentle step, and feared no danger nigh,
 The grateful leveret looked on him with mild and fearless eye,
 The blackbird and the linnet came obedient to his call—
 He loved the bright, gay fluttering things, and he was loved by all,
 Then woke the echoes of his heart, and impulse high and strong,
 Burst from the fount of glorious thought in wild melodious song,
 He sung not—for he scarce had heard—of conquests and of wars—
 He sung of woods, and flowers, and streams, of sunshine and of
 stars.

* *

MARION PAUL AIRD.

This authoress was descended from an Ayrshire family, her mother being a niece of the Rev. Hamilton Paul, the Bargany poet. She was born in Glasgow, but at an early age removed to Kilmarnock, where she resided the remainder of her years,

dying there in the seventy-third year of her age. Some time before her death she was awarded a grant from the Royal Bounty Fund in recognition of an "Immortelle" composed on the death of the Prince Consort.

Some of her poems have worthily attained a widespread popularity.

THE AULD KIRKYARD.

Calm sleep the village dead
In the auld kirkyard;
But softly, softly tread
In the auld kirkyard.
For the weary, weary rest
Wi' the green turf on their breast,
And the ashes o' the blest,
Flower the auld kirkyard.

Oh! many a tale it hath,
The auld kirkyard,
Of life's crooked, thorny path
To the auld kirkyard.
But mortality's thick gloom
Clouds the sunny world's bloom,
Veils the mystery of doom
In the auld kirkyard.

A thousand memories spring
In the auld kirkyard,
Though time's death-brooding wing,
Shade the auld kirkyard.
The light of many a hearth,
Its music and its mirth,
Sleep in the deep, dark earth
Of the auld kirkyard.

Nae dreams disturb their sleep
In the auld kirkyard;
They hear nae kindred weep
In the auld kirkyard.
The sire with silver hair,
The mother's heart of care,
The young, the gay, the fair,
Crowd the auld kirkyard.

So live that ye may lie
In the auld kirkyard,
Wi' a passport to the sky
Frae the auld kirkyard;
That when thy sand is run,
And life's weary warfare done,
Ye may sing o' victory won,
Where there's nae kirkyard.

NEIL MUIR.

Neil Muir was the last descendant of the Muirs of Lugton Ridge, in the parish of Dunlop, which up till the time of his father had been in their possession from time immemorial. He was born in Kintyre in 1815, and was educated in Kilbirmie, where he held on the even tenor of his way till death supervened. He learned the trade of cabinetmaker, but relinquished this calling, and was for many years in the employment of Messrs Merry & Cuninghame. He was a fluent speaker, and his taste for literature in general, and for poetry in particular, was well known in the district where he lived. His verses appeared from time to time in fugitive form. The following may be regarded as one of his best compositions:—

THERE IS NO DEATH.

There is no death, Creation's records have revealed
That living atoms through the universe abound;
Through countless ages that may lie concealed,
Life's Spirit moves through all the vast profound.
There is no death.

There is no death, 'tis but mysterious change
That varying moves through sea and air and earth;
The Creator still life's ashes doth arrange,
And death is but a new creation's birth.
There is no death.

There is no death, the tide of life rolls on,
Strange, yet grand, mysterious, and sublime—
Rolls back again within the dread unknown,
Yet marks its tread upon the shores of time.
There is no death.

There is no death, life's tremulous tidal wave
Still on the shores of time doth surge and break:
Where ancient life hath long time found a grave
New forms arise from that great ocean's wreck.
There is no death.

There is no death, the Creator still doth keep
Within His hand the ashes of decay,
Again to rise from out their deathless sleep—
Life's spirit cannot fade nor pass away.
There is no death.

There is no death, God's voice through nature calls
With solemn voice upon decay's cold ear;
A voice that on life's slumbering ashes falls—
An Angel's voice that all who sleep must hear,
There is no death.

There is no death, creative skill is traced
 Upon the living atoms fashioned by His hand,
 These through all time His thought and care embraced
 Since first creation rose at His command.
 There is no death.

There is no death, resounds from pole to pole,
 And from the entombèd past new form appears,
 As down the course of time life's tide still rolls
 And wakes the slumbers of ten thousand years.
 There is no death.



REVERENDS JAMES AND ROBERT E. MURRAY.

The Reverend James Murray, who was for thirty years minister of the parish of Old Cumnock, and the Rev. Robert E. Murray were brothers, who hailed originally from Peeblesshire. The former was well acquainted with James Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd, and as a contributor to the pages of "Whistlebinkie" early in life secured for himself a favourable place among the sweet harpers of Scotia. He issued several volumes of his own writings, but is perhaps best known by his "Songs of the Covenant Times," which, as the title indicates, treats of incidents enacted during the dark days of peasant persecution. The opening poem is entitled, "The Hill Preacher," and deals with incidents in the life of Alexander Peden, the Prophet of the Covenant.

The Rev. Robert E. Murray was also a poet, and issued a dainty volume of verse, entitled "The Dayspring from on High and other Poems."

The following verses are from "Songs of the Covenant" and the succeeding ones from "The Dayspring":—

WILLIAM ADAM, THE MARTYR OF MIDWELLWOOD.

Tread lightly on his ashes, for he fell
 Heart-full of love to God and all mankind!
 Little it needs the Muse his fate should tell,
 In lofty ode or elegy refined,
 To touch the soul and muse th' ingenious mind.

His chosen was to fix the bridal morn;
 Her fleet, light step already traced the dew,
 As to the moorland trysting place she drew—
 Blythe as a lark sprung from the braided corn—
 To list his voice, and low-breathed vows renew
 To him whose love and troth full well she knew.

The spoiler came before her, and she found
 Her lover stark and cold—the fell deed done—
 His spirit fled, his blood upon the ground,
 His Bible next his heart; for he was one
 Who feared his God and bore a grudge to none.

Far thence the slayers, all unmoved in aught,
 To other deeds accursed struck their way;
 The while, poor soul! with anguish deep o'er fraught
 Prone by her lover's side she sank to pray—
 Wild waverings, unrevealed till the great Judgment Day.

REVEIL.

Thoughts are like clouds—as sunshine on the hills,
 They come and go; though we court their presence
 E'er so much, they will not stay to bless us.
 Recollection strives to recall their hues,
 And, baffled much, would still restore their light.
 Vain effort! See yon stream amid the copse,
 What gladness does it pour upon the wood!
 'Mid shade and sunshine, its voice like laughter
 Of a child roaming 'mong fragrant flowers
 Falls ever softly on the listening ear,
 As music heard afar at even tide;
 Yet leave its brink, recall its melody,
 And memory, when it limns the past you loved,
 Is faint in its detail of circumstance.
 'Tis thus that often on the soul of man
 A golden thought will shine—most beautiful—
 But if some shock succeeds—some rude assault
 Made by the world without—it dies away,
 Refusing to return and fill your soul
 With that bright gladness once it did infuse.



REV. DR WILLIAM B. ROBERTSON.

This gifted preacher, poet, and lecturer, was born at Greenhill, near Stirling, and was early recognised as a person of no ordinary talents. After studying theology at Scottish and Continental universities he accepted a call to the United Presbyterian Church, Irvine, where he ministered almost continuously for about twenty-eight years, at the end of which time failing health compelled him to seek absolute rest, and he retired to the residence of his sister at Bridge of Allan, where he died.

Dr Robertson was a fluent speaker, and eloquent alike as a preacher and lecturer. Few strangers who saw him enter the pulpit and noted his slim figure and small stature could have realized the powers of oration that lay dormant in such an insignificant looking casket, had they not been attracted by the

full dark eyes, broad forehead, and expressive countenance, all of which marked their owner as a person of genius.

Dr Robertson's poems are marked by much tenderness, and abound with delicate turns of phrase, rising frequently into the high regions of imagination.

THE DEPARTED NIGH.

Departed, say we? Is it departed or come nigh?
Dear friends in Christ more visit than leave us when they die,
What thin veil still may hide them some little sickness rends,
And lo! we stand beside them! are they departed friends?

Their dews on Zion mountain, our Hermon hills bedew,
Their river from the Fountain flows down to meet us, too,
The oil on the head and under, down to the skirts doth run;
And tho' we seem asunder, we still in Christ are one.

The many tides of ocean are one vast tidal wave
That sweeps in landward motion alike to coast and cave;
And Life from Christ o'erflowing is one wave evermore,
To earth's dark caverns going, or heaven's bright pearly shore.

Hail, perfected immortals! even now we bid you hail!
We at the blood-stained portals and ye within the veil!
The thin cloud-veil between us is mere dissolving breath,
One heaven surrounds and screens us, and where art thou, O
Death?



REV. WILLIAM BUCHANAN, B.A.

It would appear there must have been some fascination about the town of Ayr for William Buchanan, who from being first an assistant preacher at Kilbirnie and afterwards minister of the parish of Kilmaurs, severed his connection with the pulpit and gravitated to Ayr, where he was appointed editor of the "Observer" newspaper. After filling for a time the editorial chair of the "Ayr Observer" he obtained a similar appointment on the staff of the "Edinburgh Courant." He held this post but a short time, for at the death of Thomas Aird, the gifted poet and editor of the "Dumfries Herald," Mr Buchanan was appointed his successor, but after an interval returned to Ayr, and was again engaged on the "Observer" staff, when death suddenly overtook him and cut short a brief but brilliant career.

Mr Buchanan gained considerable repute as an eloquent preacher when in Kilmaurs, and also brought himself under

favourable notice as a poet by composing a Burns Centenary Ode, which is considered one of the finest odes ever written on this over-hackneyed theme.

ROBERT BURNS—CENTENARY ODE.

We hail to-day his glorious birth
 One hundred years ago,
 Who taught his brothers o'er the earth
 To think, to feel, to glow;
 Whose independent spirit fires
 In countless thousands now,
 Ay, and will burn till Truth expires—
 That Roman of the plough!

Who spurned the falsehood of pretence,
 The insolence of pride,
 Who measured men by worth and sense,
 And not by mere outside;
 Who from the mob that worship state,
 Turned to the sterling few,
 That honour—what alone is great—
 The Good, the Just, the True.

Thy story, Burns, a tale unfolds,
 As thrilling as thy song;
 Oh, that the age which now beholds
 Might hate thy crying wrong—
 The cold neglect, contemptuous airs,
 The cruel, callous sneers
 Proud Dulness towards Genius bears;
 And worse, mayhap, the tears—

The maudlin tears which only fall
 As soon as men are dead,
 And flow full-coursing down the pall
 Of bards who wanted bread;
 The hypocritic tears accurst,
 So like their ways and doom,
 Who used to kill the prophets first,
 And garnished next their tomb.

* * * * *

His lyrics stir our British blood
 Wherever Britons toil:
 They fell the far Canadian wood,
 Dig the Australian soil;
 Where Northern winters hold their reign,
 And Eastern summers long,
 They bind our sons in one strong chain
 Of sentiment and song.

Hail Scotia's Bard! Long shall be felt
 Thy lyre so many-stringed;
 To sooth, to madden, and to melt,
 What words like thine are wing'd?

One age—and do we deem it hard
 That but one Burns appears?
 Nay, men were bless'd with such a bard
 Once in a thousand years.

For he shall live, and shall live on,
 When all those years are past;
 While harvests wave and rivers run,
 While pangs and passions last;
 He'll be till Nature's final hour
 Looks wan in Nature's face,
 A name, a presence, and a power,
 To move the human race.



WILLIAM GUNNYON.

Many of the older generation of the good people of Kilmarnock will remember William Gunnyon, the schoolmaster of the New Academy in Princes Street, and some of them can even tell how his reputation for strap-wielding made roots respected. The success of his pupils at the universities was for years phenomenal. Mr Gunnyon devoted a large share of his spare time to general literature besides writing a considerable number of poetical pieces, which appeared in various magazines and newspapers of the period. His chief contributions to literature are a biographical memoir written for Nimmo's Edition of Burns, and "Illustrations of Scottish Life and History in Song and Ballad." Translations from the Greek Anthology and from German Hymnology also occupied his attention, and several of these are reckoned superior.

Mr Gunnyon was born in Lauriston, Kirkcudbright, and was brought to Kilmarnock when a child. For many years he had a successful career as a teacher there, and held for a time the presidency of Kilmarnock Burns Club. In later years he removed to Edinburgh and subsequently to Glasgow, where, in addition to general literature, he engaged in encyclopædic work.

TRANSLATION FROM THE GREEK ANTHOLOGY.

Not Hymen, but the Bridegroom Death,
 Fair Clearista found,
 When she upon the bridal night
 Her virgin zone unbound.
 Now at her gate the music sweet
 Of the evening flutes arose,
 Now heard a-clashing as the doors
 Of the nuptial chamber close.

At morn the hymeneal strains
 In gushing gladness flow;
 But, quickly changed, they die away
 In wailing notes of woe;
 And the same torches that had lit
 The way to the bridal bed,
 With mournful lustre now illumed
 Her passage to the Dead.

THE HEAVENLY FRIEND.

(Translated from the "German Hymnology.")

Forbear ye worldly wise to say,
 That none but equals can be friends,
 And that the Heavenly Majesty
 To human fellowship ne'er bends;
 For I am nought, while God is all;
 He still so great, I still so small;
 I still so weak, so mighty He;
 A sinner I, He purity;
 A shadow I, He light divine—
 Yet I'm my friend's and He is mine.

My Goel, mine Emmanuel,
 My Middleman, to whom was given
 To raise my sin-stained soul from hell,
 Though it has drawn Him down from Heaven:
 The Lamb of God, and David's Son,
 My Lord and God and Spouse in one,
 To earth, from heaven His holy home,
 Came down my soul-friend to become,
 My flesh and bone, a man like me—
 His friend am I, my friend is He.

God, who his blessed Son me gave,
 Confirms each blessing in the Son,
 As well his sorrows, cross, and grave,
 As his bright crown and heavenly throne.
 Yes, what he says, does, has of good,
 His word and spirit, flesh and blood;
 What he hath striven for and won,
 What he hath suffered and hath done—
 That, yea all that shall now be mine,
 For Thou'rt my friend, and I am Thine.

His gracious love can richly feed
 The soul of every Christian brother.
 We dare not, therefore, grudge this meed,
 This highest meed, to one another.
 Through our most large enjoyment shall
 His rich abundance never fail:
 So I'll forbid that love to none,
 Yet use it as 'twere all mine own;
 Here's no dispute of mine and thine—
 I am my friend's, and He is mine.

Without Him, earth's a yawning hell!
 Without Him, heaven were sorrow laden!
 Whereas His love, where'er I dwell,
 Can change the wilderness to Eden.
 Without Him, plenty yields to sorrow,
 With time too long, the world too narrow.
 I am, though all my friends should flee,
 And angels, too, abandon me,
 Lonely, in truth, but not alone—
 One friend I have, though all were gone.

His is my body, His my soul,
 His hand creates, His blood redeems;
 His oil here feeds and keeps it whole,
 Till there 'tis blest beyond our dreams.
 My courage His. His is my will,
 All that I am or hope for still.
 Yea, all I am and all I have,
 His gracious loving kindness gave,
 Would no ingratitude were mine!
 Thou art my friend, and I am Thine.

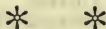
His is my work, His my renown:
 I sought him not, yet still he found me.
 Alas! all I can call mine own
 Is only sin and shame to wound me.
 Yet on the Cross my gracious friend
 Beneath this load of mine did bend,
 And to secure my soul from woe,
 My guilt and punishment did throw
 Into His bloody grave divine!
 I am my friend's, and He is mine.

His are my fortune, time, and fame!
 His are my dying and my living!
 His honour and His service claim
 What He has given and is giving.
 Hence what I do or what I spurn,
 From Him doth come, to Him return!
 His is my every woe and smart,
 He takes so softly to His heart:
 He feels and mitigates my pain—
 My friend is mine, I'm His again.

Though every friend should rage to rend me,
 He makes it that I'm not astounded;
 The Judge himself will still befriend me:
 I'd fear not though the trump had sounded:
 Were earth to crack and heaven to tumble,
 Though in the grave my bones should crumble:
 Though heart and flesh should faint and fail me,
 As to my soul nought can assail me:—
 For on my gravestone read this line—
 "I am my friend's, my friend is mine."

SONNET—TO THE ROSE.

Sweet summer-blowing flower, what rare perfume
 Thy purple leaves upon the winds diffuse,
 When bathed in showers, or moist with twilight dews;
 How deep thy blushes and how rich thy bloom;
 Within thee lies, as in some sacred tomb,
 A soul of holy modesty, that woos
 The lover's dear regard, the poet's muse—
 Thou best and brightest growth of Flora's womb!
 Pure emblem of a maiden in the pride
 Of morning beauty and unsullied name;
 Whose priceless dower it is, whate'er betide,
 That she chaste Dian's favouring smile can claim;
 For Beauty when unfenced by Virtue's power,
 Is but a scentless rose—a poor, unhonoured flower.

MRS DOUGLAS, *NEE* SARAH PARKER.

Sarah Parker was a native of Newry, Ireland, and was well known in Ayrshire and the West of Scotland by her pen name, "The Irish Girl." She left her native district at an early age and settled with her parents in Ayr, where her musings attracted the notice of the literati, and they assisted her to publish a volume of her poems, which soon after it appeared gained her much fame. As she grew up to womanhood her habits became somewhat unsettled, but eventually she was married to a country school teacher named Douglas, whom she survived. After the death of her husband she resided with her sister in a mean abode in Glasgow, and there she died amid gloom and depression, almost broken-hearted and bowed down with poverty and all its attendant evils. In view of her chequered career and sad ending a pathetic interest attaches to her poem entitled—

THE STREAM OF LIFE.

Life's infant stream, how calm and fair
 And beautiful it lies,
 Its silvery surf reflecting clear
 Young morning's cloudless skies!
 How smooth our little bark glides on
 Upon the sunny stream—
 How everything we gaze upon
 Looks bright as poet's dream!

Unruffled by one breeze of care
 The waters onward glide,
 Unbittered by one woe-fraught tear
 Flows on the lucid tide:

Or if a tear should chance to fall
 In childish sorrowing,
 'Tis lighter than the dewy pearl
 Shook from the skylark's wing.

* * * *

The stream is deeper, wider now,
 And fitful gales arise;
 Deep whirlpools grumble far below,
 And darker seem the skies.
 We're launched on manhood's wat'ry waste—
 We drink of manhood's cup—
 'Tis gall and acid to the taste—
 Ah! where's the honied drop?

Hope, like a phantom, but allures
 Our way from wave to wave
 With joys that never can be ours
 This side the darksome grave.
 As little wanton schoolboys try
 Their shadows to outrun,
 So we pursue the fleeting joy,
 And end as we began.

* *

ROBERT ADAMSON.

Robert Adamson, who has been described as a poet of homely but true talent, was born near Dunfermline, and being put early to field work received a very scant school education. In Muirkirk, where he has spent the greater part of his life as engine-keeper at the Ironworks, he is much respected and is looked on as a splendid type of the honest, hardy, and independent sons of toil indigenous to Scottish soil. His verse is smooth and flowing, and the moral tone is high and healthy.

Not an altogether unworthy specimen of the class of poetry excelled in by Ballantine, Crawford, Miller, and Anderson, is Mr Adamson's nursery song, entitled—

WEE DAVIE.

Wee Davie, wi' his rosy cheeks,
 Sparklin' een and curly pow,
 Hose and knickerbocker breeks,
 Is a dainty man, I trow.

Sportive as the little lammie,
 Friskin' fu' o' Nature's fun;
 Dancin' fondly round its mammy
 'Mid the smilin' simmer sun.

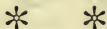
No' a care nor grief to wrinkle
 His wee silken, sunny broo;
 Nor to dim the starry twinkle
 O' his een, sae bonnie blue.

Yet a moment never idle,
 Rompin', trampin', up and doun;
 Heedless o' baith bit and bridle—
 Little, lauchin', lordie loon.

There he's on the poker ridin'
 Races but an' ben the hoose;
 Noo into a corner hidin',
 Mim as ony little moose.

Keepin' his wee sisie seekin'
 Lang an' weary, high an' low,
 Till the little rogie, keekin'
 Round the corner, cries "Keek-bo!"

What a tirrorree o' lauchin',
 Strivin' the last "tig" to gie!
 Dinna flyte! their dinsome daffin'
 Sweetest music is to me.



JOHN HYSLOP.

Many people will remember John Hyslop, the postman-poet, whose figure was for a number of years a familiar one on the streets of Kilmarnock. Mr Hyslop was born in Dumfriesshire, but early in life removed with his parents to Kilmarnock, where, previous to entering the Post Office service, he learned the trade of an engineer. His poetry is effusive, soulful, and earnest.

THE WAUNERT WEAN.

O hap him up kindly and carry him hame,
 The laddie lies soun' in a slumber sae deep:
 For Death's baney fingers hae closed his een,
 An' sealed them up firm in a cauld icy sleep.
 Wee Wullie gaed oot ae sweet mornin' in spring,
 As his fond mither thought, just to sport and to play;
 But a dark cloud fell down on her sad, yearning heart
 When he didna come hame at the close o' the day.

An' for twa lang days and three cauld weary nights
 They sought far and near for the puir waunert wean
 But to feed the deep gloom—the sad hope deferred—
 For nae word could they get o' the road he had gane.

Oh! fresh, clear, and bonnie the third mornin' broke
 To a' save the watchers, sad, weary, and worn,
 Then a score o' their frien's cam' to join in the search
 In the calm, holy hush o' the sweet Sabbath morn.

* * * * *

An' his faither and mither need mourn him nae mair,
 Nor think their wee bairnie greets, hungry and lane,
 For the angels cam' down i' the howe o' the nicht,
 An' they bore him awa' to a heavenly hame.
 An' though lang years may pass ere they travel alane,
 Through the mists and the shadows, down death's dreary road,
 If they keep their lives pure, they will meet him again,
 In the peace and the rest o' the glory of God.

* *

JANET KELSO MUIR.

Janet Kelso Muir displays much versatility in her poetical musings. Her style is full, spontaneous, and flowing, shewing marked facility, and freedom from anything partaking of laboured production. Although not a native of Ayrshire this authoress passed almost the whole of her life in the town of Kilmarnock, where she was brought up under the care of an aunt. Her school education was meagre in the extreme, but equal to that generally bestowed on the youth of her day and generation. This defective tuition she bewailed in after years in her poetical sketch, "The Schoolmaster."

"And so our Tutor ever strove to teach
 The rising soul the truth within its reach.
 His ready stories we remember still,
 Disguising oft the steps on learning's hill:
 His genial smile, or justly earned praise,
 Proved due incentive in those early days.
 Would kindlier fate had longer, 'neath his rule,
 Left one poor learner at the much-loved school."

Miss Muir was a person of unassuming and refined manners, with a countenance lightened up by an inner joy that could only arise from a sense of her own praiseworthiness. After being in the service of a leading drapery firm in Kilmarnock she commenced business as a milliner on her own account, at which she continued to work till near the end of her days.

GOOD-NIGHT.

Good-night, my love, good-night,
 One kiss of lips so sweet,
 One clasp of soft white hands so small,
 And then the whisper meet,
 From lips with smiles enwreathéd bright,
 In tones of love, good-night, good-night.

Good-night, my love, good-night,
 Cease, prattler, from thy play!
 Thy brief, bright day of busy thought
 Hath swiftly passed away.
 Now fold thy hands and close thine eye,
 And rest sweet one, the night is nigh.

Good-night, my love, good-night,
 But first thine evening prayer,
 The common care of childish hearts
 To the same Father's care:
 Then let thy lips at length be dumb;
 Sleep, darling, sleep, the night has come.

Good-night, my love, good-night,
 Good angels guard thy bed,
 With golden dreams of fairer worlds,
 Like sunshine o'er thee shed:
 And be thy waking as the light
 When morning dawns, good-night, good-night.

Good-night, my love, good-night,
 A fond good-night to thee.
 The morn is breaking clear and bright:
 When shall thy waking be?
 Are those dear lips still hushed and dumb,
 Or dream we that the night is come?

Good-night, my love, good-night,
 A long good-night to thee.
 Thy waking shall be fairer far
 Than we had dreamt to see:
 But oh! our joy—our spirit's light—
 Went out with thee. Good-night!

* *

JANE LECK.

The family to which this poetess belongs is well-known in Ayrshire, and has for many years been settled at Holybush. Miss Leck spent her childhood and girlhood years in Glasgow, where she received a good school education, to which was added a finishing touch in Germany. Her lyre is tuned to many moods, and alternates between the grave and the gay in a

manner that gives evidence of considerable mastery over the instrument.

Much sympathetic insight is revealed in the verses entitled "A Word for Children."

O Mother, when a rosy face
Tear-stained looks up in yours,
Be swift to kiss away the grief
The baby heart endures.

It may be but a broken toy,
A childish wish denied,
That makes the little bosom heave,
And brings him to your side.

What you regard as trifling things
Are real griefs to him.
A few drops in a tiny cup
Will fill it to the brim.

Whate'er it be, he looks to you
As strongest, wisest, best;
Where should he seek for comforting
But on his mother's breast?

You may be busy, lay aside
The needle, book, or pen;
For childish trust repelled, may die,
Nor spring to life again.

Then keep intact the child's first faith,
That so the boy, the youth,
May never doubt, whate'er betide,
A mother's love and truth.

That, looking back, the man may feel
God's meaning when He saith,
"And I will comfort you as one
His mother comforteth."

* *

MRS MARGARET WILSON.

Mrs Margaret Wilson, who was born in Govan, has a very moderate opinion of her own effusions, which she calls "Echoes." Indeed, she lays no claim to the title of poetess, especially in Ayrshire, where, according to her expressed opinion, "the only poet of note is Robert Burns." It would be a pity, nevertheless, were all the warblers of the grove to sit mute because they cannot approach the perfection of the nightingale or the skylark.

Mrs Wilson was turned quite forty years of age ere she committed any of her lyrical pieces to paper, although from earliest childhood she was accustomed to compose words to any sweet melody that caught her musical fancy. For upwards of ten years she has resided in Dundonald, and although "the gloamin' o' life" is casting its shadow o'er her she has that light within her which ever makes for peace and happiness.

COME IN, BONNIE ROBIN.

Come in, bonnie Robin, come in,
An' shelter a wee frae the snaw,
The bairns are no hame frae the schule,
An' there's naebody in but us twa.
We heard ye aye chirping outside,
An' kent ye had nae meat ava,
For midges an' worms they are dead
Or buried deep doon in the snaw.

Come in, bonnie Robin, come in,
Just hop a wee nearer the bed,
In sicht o' a wee wae-gaun face
That's watching to see Robin fed.
He has broken a hale biscuit doon,
An' says that it will be a feast,
An' a' that he wants in return
Is a sicht o' yer bonnie red breast.

Come in, bonnie Robin, come in,
Ye ken oor wee man's gaun awa';
He wonders if Robins will come
Up where there is ne'er any snaw.
My bairn, if they're needed for thee,
Your happiness there to complete,
Their bonnie red breasts you will see,
And oh! but their sang will be sweet.

Come back, bonnie Robin, the morn,
An' cheer up this wee wae-gaun he'rt;
We'll keep him till then if we can,
For oh! we are loth, loth to part.

Come back though the snaw gangs awa',
For desolate then I will be;
The angels will then hae my bairn,
He winna be watching for thee.

* *

JOHN PETTIGREW

John Pettigrew, who was known in Ayrshire as the "roving gardener," adds another to the long list of Scotland's minor

minstrels. Many of his sketches and poetical effusions were much admired when first they appeared in the pages of the "People's Journal" and other periodicals, and some of them were thought worthy of a place in "Kyle's Scottish Gems." The following lyric must command the attention of every Scotsman who has the least pulsation of Highland blood in his veins.

Where the Highland Tartans wave
Men are found endowed with feeling,
Love and friendship ever crave
A home in every lonely shieling.
'Mongst the rugged mountains wild
Saddened hearts may fondly wander,
Where the giant cliffs are piled,
Towering high in rocky grandeur.

Where the Highland Tartans wave
Love and freedom join together;
No vain tyrant, serf, nor slave
Treads the bonnie purple heather.

'Vengeful War may sound his blast,
Haughty kings and armies crushing,
Firm and faithful to the last
Highland swains are foremost rushing.
Heedless of the sword or spear,
'Midst the dying, dead, and gory,
Stalwart men, unknown to fear,
Forward rush to death or glory.

Where the Highland Tartans wave, etc.

'Mongst the bonnie fern-clad braes
Peerless maidens, fair and youthful,
Free and guileless spend their days,
Artless, winning, kind, and truthful.
Some for sake of wealth or fame
O'er the ocean go a-roaming;
'Mongst the heath I'll find a home,
Where I'll live until life's gloamin'.

Where the Highland Tartans wave, etc.

* *

JOHN BOWER.

John Bower, a prolific composer of verse, was born in Edinburgh, but removed in early life with his parents to Kelso, where he found employment in the office of the "Kelso Chronicle." After filling this post for a time he entered the service of a firm of iron and coalmasters in Lanarkshire, and subsequently removed to New Cumnock, to take up the

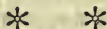
appointment of head clerk to the Bank Coal Company there. In the classic district of Glen Avon, sung into fame by the genius of Robert Burns, Mr Bower became inspired to melodious outpourings, and his effusions fill three volumes, which give evidence of considerable poetic power on the part of their author.

OUT OF THE SILENCE.

"Out of the Silence!" The night has fled;
The sun has risen—the east is gay;
And fair, like a maiden garmented
For loving espousal, comes the day;
Song is before her, and sound behind—
Ripple of river, and swell of sea;
Songsters, adoring, pour on the wind
Chorus of infinite melody.

"Out of the Silence!" The hours are fleet,
And time is a torrent none can stay;
Manhood and youth with feverish heat
Laugh for a little and pass away.
So for a summer I seek to soar,
Sing through the seasons the roses reign—
Ah! I will listen to doubt no more,
One must adventure if one must gain.

"Out of the Silence!" For weal or woe,
Robed in the raiment of modest trust;
Nobler to strive with a stronger foe
Than rest in a slothful ease and rust.
So for the day; and I kneel and pray
The fates would favour my early flight,
Sweeten the way for a first essay,
Out of the silence to sound and light.



REV. MALCOLM MACLELLAN.

Malcolm MacLellan was born in Greenock, but when only a few months old was transferred to the banks of the Garnock Water, where he spent his boyhood years, and was educated in Glengarnock Public School. He is now minister of St. Peter's Church, Glasgow, to which charge he was ordained in 1886. Although long ago inured to the bustle and strain of a busy city life, his remembrance of boyhood days has not faded, and as Thomas MacQueen, of Barkip, in his exiled musings mourned the irrevocable scenes of youth, so the Rev. Malcolm MacLellan still remembers how

"The sacred ties of life's young day
 Were long since forced to sever,
 And the holy sounds of love's sweet lay,
 Youth's melody and mirth so gay,
 Are silent now for ever."

Mr MacLellan has often been urged by members of his congregation to issue a selection of his poems, and hopes some day to meet their wishes. He has contributed at regular intervals to the pages of the "Scottish Church," "Ayrshire Weekly News," "Weekly Herald," and other journals. He is the author of a small volume of sermons, entitled "The Permanence of Christianity," which was most favourably criticised by the late Dr Matheson, of Innellan, and other distinguished ministers of the Church of Scotland.

Mr MacLellan's sermons are no less practical than thoughtful, and his language in frequent passages gives evidence of his innate leaning towards poetic expression. He is a master of pathos, as anyone who has read his truly beautiful lines, "My Mary Sleeps," will be constrained to acknowledge.

THE CHANGES OF TIME.

Decay will mark all things that grow
 In forest, glen, or garden plot;
 And fairest flowers 'neath winter's snow
 Lie dead like dreams remembered not.

The castellated towers of yore,
 Whose very ruins are sublime,
 Are crumbled now from roof to floor
 Beneath the silent tread of time.

The stately dames and lordly knights
 And ladies fair of high degree,
 Whose loves and hates, whose scorns and slights,
 Are sung in Scottish minstrelsy.

Ah, me! they too are passed away,
 As if in life they ne'er had been;
 O'er walls that rung with laughter gay
 The grass is growing lank and green.

'Tis still the same. We enter life
 And play our little parts, and then
 We leave behind the din and strife
 And all the busy haunts of men.

Say, is there aught that, free from change,
 Will last throughout eternity,
 Within the widest, furthest range
 Of our sad, frail humanity?

There comes within my doubting heart
 An angel-whisper from above,
 Which tells me that when worlds depart
 One thing remains—Immortal Love.

We know not what the years will find
 To show us in life's hidden stream;
 We only know that God was kind
 To bless the world with such a dream.

SHE SLEEPS—A DIRGE.

The snow enrobes the ground:
 Deep stillness reigns around:
 My love sweet rest has found,
 She sleeps—my Mary sleeps.

The mourners come and go,
 With footsteps soft and low;
 Her robes are like the snow,
 She sleeps—my Mary sleeps.

Methinks my heart will break:
 She never more will wake:
 She feels not pain nor ache:
 She sleeps—my Mary sleeps.

Her lips are cold and white:
 Her eyes have lost their light:
 In death's dark lonely night
 She sleeps—my Mary sleeps.

They hide my love from me,
 Her face I cannot see:
 Oh! sad, strange mystery!
 She sleeps—my Mary sleeps.

My tears in silence fall:
 I see the old church wall—
 The grave, the funeral pall;
 She sleeps—my Mary sleeps.

They lay her 'neath the clay;
 She will not wake, they say,
 Until the last great Day,
 She sleeps—my Mary sleeps.

THE BANKS O' GARNOCK.

There are burnies far bigger and broader, I ween,
 Wi' banks buskit braw in their garments o' green,
 But dearer and fairer than a' I hae seen
 Are the sweet, bonnie banks o' the Garnock.

I've paidled its stream wi' my breeks to the knee,
 An' dooked, the lang day, wi' the heartiest o' glee,
 An' fished for the trouts wi' the rod an' the flee
 By the green, bonnie banks o' the Garnock.

In winter wi' joy on its ice I wad slide,
 In summer I'd gather the flow'rets wi' pride,
 An' play wi' my schulemates at "seek" an' at "hide"
 On the bonnie green banks o' the Garnock.

Noo schulemates are scattered, some east and some wast,
 An' some sleep in stillness the sleep that's their last,
 Yet aften I wander an' dream o' the past
 Doun the dear, bonnie banks o' the Garnock.

When the joys o' childhood had a' fled an' gane,
 Ae nicht as I strayed by the burnie alane,
 I met a sweet lassie wha noo is my ain,
 By the braw buskit banks o' the Garnock.

An' aft in the gloamin', her han' laid in mine,
 Her violet-blue een like the stars brichtly shine,
 As I whisper o' love an' the days o' lang syne
 On the sweet, bonnie banks o' the Garnock.



JAMES MORGAN.

James Morgan, who has made a close study of the works of the best Scottish Poets, has contributed some excellent lyrical pieces to the "People's Friend," the "Galston Supplement," and other periodicals. His muse is not prolific, but gives evidence of studious and cultured thought. Mr Morgan was born in Glasgow, but when only six months of age was sent to Galston and put under the care of an aunt. After being engaged for a few years in the collieries, he obtained employment in the calendar room of Messrs J. M. Robertson & Company's Lace and Madras Works.

In addition to being a poet, Mr Morgan has cultivated the sister art of music, and is well-known locally as a trainer of the young for the musical festivals which lend an occasional brightness to the dreariness of our long winter evenings. Mr Morgan has held for a number of years the appointment of leader of praise in the Erskine U.F. Church, Galston.

THE CRIPPLE BOY TO HIS PET CANARY.

Oh! dickie bird you sing so sweet
 Your song of sun and sky,
 Though but tiny gleams and glimpses greet
 Your cunning little eye.
 My pretty bird, I'm caged too,
 But I cannot—cannot sing like you.

For I long to be like other boys,
 Strong-limbed and joyous and free,
 But their merry games and boisterous joys
 Are all denied to me:
 And often with tears my eyes grow dim
 When I think how useless my life doth seem.

Oh, dickie bird, come tell me true,
 If you were me what would you do,
 Would you then sing merrily?
 For I sigh and fret, and fret and fear,
 When I think how long I may suffer here.

Or, dickie, say would you happier be
 If I opened the window pane,
 And bade you fly o'er field and tree
 To face the wind and rain?
 No, you'd pine and die for the kinder clime
 Of your safe, warm cage at this winter time.

So God mayhap hath caged me here
 That life's storms may past me roll,
 That the chills and frosts of the outer sphere
 May not destroy my soul:
 And that I may be free in the fairer clime
 Of Heaven above in His own good time.

MERRY GANGS THE MILL WHEN THE LADE
RINS FU'.

Whate'er ye be oot in the warl wi' a' its toil and strife
 Aye cairry hame a cheery he'rt to bless the weans and wife;
 Oh, there's nae room for sulky gloom whaur he'rts are warm and
 true,
 For it's merry gangs the mill when the lade rins fu'.

Whan your bit wife's oppressed wi' work, oh dinna sit an' glower,
 She never wi' twa willin' han's can dae the wark o' fower;
 Then help your wife to thole the strife, 'twill mak' her dearer lo'e,
 An' its merry gangs the mill when the lade rins fu'.

Oh, dinna curb the bairns owre much, let them their freedom hae,
 For noo's their time for happiness—the future brings them wae;
 Say let them stray, by burn an' brae, 'mang sunshine that they lo'e,
 For it's merry gangs the mill when the lade rins fu'.

Fu' mony a he'rt in life's sair strife wad ne'er be hauf sae sad,
 If but ae kindly frien' wad speak a word to mak' it glad—
 Wad lauch to fley its cares awa'—oh, let that frien' be you,
 For it's merry gangs the mill when the lade rins fu'.

Then up an' speak the cheerin' word, an' sing an' lauch wi' me;
 Rise up an' dicht awa' the bitter tear frae sorrow's e'e;
 Oh, dinna wrang my wee bit sang by wearin' gloom's bent broo,
 For it's merry gangs the mill when the lade rins fu'.

THEN AND NOW.

'Twas in a sunlit garden—roses blossomed round our feet,
 But the roses on your pretty cheek were more entrancing sweet;
 The blackbirds in the orchard trilled their anthems glad and free,
 But the music of your gentle voice was sweeter far to me.

Then your step was light and graceful, and your brow was smooth
 and fair,
 And the sunbeams flashed a radiance from your crown of golden
 hair;
 Then earth did seem a golden dream of Paradise to me,
 As we stood within the garden and I told my love to thee.

Then the spirit of love's summer wrought a spell within our bosoms,
 A spell whose mystic glory made our hearts together glow,
 Bathed us in sunlit ecstasy just like the starry blossoms
 That glowed with bright, gay colours in that summer long ago.

To-day with failing steps we walk the garden as of old,
 And silver gleams among your hair once bright with yellow gold—
 'Tis autumn time, and tarnished all is Nature's flow'ry crown,
 While from the trees the withered leaves drop slowly, sadly down.

The swallow leaves the sheltering eaves, for chilly breathes the air,
 And spreads his wing to seek the spring in sunny south lands fair;
 But we may not return to youth, that springtime bright and free,
 When your eyes shone bright with the mystic light that once
 enchanted me.

'Tis sombre autumn with our lives, the roses droop and wither,
 Yet, seamed and lined, your dear, dear face seems sweeter than
 before;
 And as thro' life we've mourned and joyed and laughed and sighed
 together,
 So now we love with full, ripe bliss, unknown in days of yore.



REV. ROBERT M. ADAMSON.

A writer of versatile talent and a proficient scholar, Mr Adamson, after a very successful college career, begun at the Universities of Edinburgh and Dundee and completed at

Leipzig and Jena, was appointed assistant pastor of a Free Church at Aberdeen, and subsequently received a call to the Free Church, Ardrossan. His literary work comprises contributions to "The People's Friend," "Cassell's Magazine," and several "Reviews," and his dramatic poems have been recited with success by several professional elocutionists.

LINES TO BEETHOVEN.

O mighty master of a glorious art,
Where'er thy soul divine may chance to dwell,
Take thou this tribute of a graceful heart,
My heart that loves thee more than words can tell.
Ah! how much richer are our souls since thou
Hast made us hear the heavenly harmony
Of those eternal melodies, which now
And ever roll through God's infinity!
Majestic manhood, wondrous genius come,
And smite our spirits into living fire,
Our being flags, and our poor lips are dumb,
Send our hearts singing, tune life's fainting lyre,
Oh, godlike soul, deep stricken, yet so strong,
Monarch of sound and king of deathless song!



DAVID B. ROBB.

David B. Robb, whose thirty-year connection with Ayrshire ceased in 1902, when he left Scotland for America, was born at Burslem, in Staffordshire, whither his parents had removed from Ayrshire a short time previous to his advent. By this unfortunate treck of his parents "over the borders" our poet was deprived of the honour of being a "Scotsman born." His parents did not settle long in England, and on his return to the "Land of Burns" David was sent to school at Muirkirk, and afterwards at Dreghorn, Newmilns, and Galston in succession. His school-days over, he found employment in the collieries, and being thrown idle by the prolonged strike of 1894, he travelled on foot to Dumfries, Carlisle, and Newcastle, his first poetical composition being the result of a visit paid to Burns's Mausoleum while on his way thither. Returning to Ayrshire, he was appointed agent and collector to the Miners' Union, a post which he creditably filled up to the time of his leaving for America. Since settling in the United States he has on several occasions been deputed to represent the miners at special conventions held to formulate regulations and important bye-laws affecting miners and organised labour.

Mr Robb's effusions are directed towards the raising of his fellow-workers, and are strongly imbued with Socialistic principles.

LINES

Written after a conversation with a lady of talent.

When mind meets mind, and passions burn, that seek to conquer
 wrongs;
 Intelligence, with joint accord, can see mankind in thongs:
 Nor sex nor creed can blindly lead, to keep those minds apart,
 That dare to teach,
 In forceful speech,
 The ideals of the heart.

When duty calls on volunteers to lead the cause of right,
 Those hearts respond, with purpose pure—put selfish ends to flight;
 But selfish man enjoins the plan that seeks to stifle greed;
 The world looks down,
 With angry frown,
 On all who dare to lead.

When Greece and Rome were flourishing, and haughty Spain was
 great,
 Man's human wrongs were then the same, and martyrs met their
 fate;
 But God decrees—Himself to please, and Empires pass away,
 While Justice lives
 With Him who gives—
 Throughout Eternity.

THE DAWN OF FREEDOM.

(Dedicated to John Morrison Davidson.)

Since first I felt that inward force which shapes my thoughts in
 rhyme,
 Whose magic force directs my course in manhood's cause sublime;
 I've brooded o'er, with heart afire, the cause and cure of woe,
 But find those cords, round son and sire, pull tighter as we go.

Reform throughout the universe re-echoes everywhere,
 And things that are will cease to be—retrenchment fills the air;
 Its soul-inspiring influence is carried o'er the wave,
 With bright and broad magnificence, the human race to save.

* * * * *

The dawn of freedom creeps along, imperfect systems quake,
 And mighty hosts will join the throng, and those who sleep will wake
 To claim their birthright long delayed, and filched from them with
 stealth,
 The universe has disobeyed a God-sent commonwealth.

* * * * *

Ten million hearts beat fast and firm for universal love,
 And thrice ten million nurse the germ inhaled with every move;
 And progress now goes marching on to free the human race,
 While Heaven's approving smile has shown that man may reach
 his place.

* * * * *

* *

TOM SMITH.

Tom Smith, although born in Govan, has long been a resident of the upper valley of Irvine. He is a sympathetic student of Nature, and, like Ruskin, would "rather have a wood walk than a city street, rather see a seagull fly than shoot it, and hear a thrush sing than eat it." Byron, Shelley, Burns, and Keats are his favourite poets, in emulating whom he has collected poetical manuscripts sufficient to make a fair volume of occasional pieces, epistles, and satires. While his harp is multi-strung, satire is perhaps its strongest cord, but his effusiveness is such that all moods and measures seem alike easy to him, possessing as he does the gift of rhyme and rhythm in an astonishing degree.

Mr Smith believes that there is ample cause for much of the derision thrown at amateur poets, but, on the other hand, deems that a great deal of it is quite unwarrantable. This position has led him to defend the minor poet from the slings and arrows of would-be critics who find it much easier to croak like a frog than warble like a mavis. His sympathy with the aspiring bard finds expression in the following lines:—

"If some should think my muse is crude,
 My untrained song condemn,
 This, this shall be my attitude,
 And my reply to them—
 'Why should the mavis seal his throat
 Within our own dear vales,
 Although he cannot match the note
 Of southern nightingales?'"

TO A FRIEND IN MINOR MOOD.

Thanks, thanks, my friend, for this deserved arraignment,
 But do not deem while there's light in the sun
 That our two spirits will admit estrangement,
 For, at the core, our hearts are really one.

In life's big battle we must strive and tussle,
 And never stop nor falter in the race;
 And though our natures were not born for bustle,
 To drop out early would be called disgrace.

Here where men fight and tumble o'er each other,
 Here where they scramble till they're hoarse and blind;
 O! it is rare; a message from a brother
 Who deems that matter is less worth than mind.

Here where the prize is given to the winner,
 Small matter by what method he has won;
 A chosen soul, less valued than a sinner,
 And his rewards are very few, or none.

But never mind! In secret we will cherish
 And keep before us what is clean and true.
 Better to seem to fail, aye, seem to perish,
 Than take rewards that never were our due.

Better to choose the thorny path and lonely,
 Than to be hailed with empty, cheap success;
 Better despised, misunderstood, than only
 To rise on waves of vain ungraciousness.

If then, dear brother, I have seemed neglectful,
 Put it, at worst, that circumstance is strong;
 Do not imagine I am less respectful,
 Do not believe it is a studied wrong.

Days of the past! Ah yes, friend, they were golden
 Days when our friendship could stand any test:
 When they are in life's memory beholden—
 Small wonder is it that we think them blest.

And yet, to-day, I am not found complaining;
 Why should I be? enjoying and enjoyed;
 I have my own, increasing and remaining,
 To keep my love unweariedly employed.

Harvests I've reaped that were of others' sowing,
 Kindness received that shames and pales my own;
 Even now I see the waves of yellow blowing,
 Rich, ripe, and waiting only to be mown.

And so can you! The old friends still are loyal;
 Nor have you found, I think, in recent years
 That only in the past were natures royal,
 Not always has your cup been one of tears.

Cherish the past, fight bravely in the present,
 Hope in the future many joys to find;
 Smile in the face of fate, make it look pleasant,
 Know at least one remaineth true and kind.

ESTRANGED.

Let us forget unworthiness,
 All that's ignoble let us ban,
 But let us cherish lovingly
 The brighter things, as still we can.

Surely! in all the time that's past
 All was not impotent and mean,
 There grew some lilies in the vast,
 Wide stretch of life's unfruitful green.
 And if in folly sometimes we
 Plucked flowers of poison, pain and grief,
 And gave to others thoughtlessly
 The nightshade and the nettle leaf—
 Let us remember what was best
 And think on the sweet scented flowers—
 Let us forget now all the rest
 But cherish still the golden hours.

Lines on a Little New-Comer.

Gavin, my friend, another little stranger
 Within our home has recently had birth,
 Another man to fight in face of danger,
 Another heir to sorrow and to mirth.

"Welcome" and "Hail!" we say to this wee laddie,
 May he be fragrant as a day in spring,
 May he excel by far his wayward daddy
 And have greater cause than even he to sing.

May life for him be full and well appointed,
 May nothing mar his vision or his view,
 And if he finds this "scheme of things" disjointed,
 Still to what's best let him remain aye true.

Great wealth I crave not shall become his portion;
 Talents enough to fit him for his part,
 Great in those things that never cause distortion;
 Proud, proud possessor of a true and quiet heart.

Up dizzy heights I would not have him scaling,
 Nor in the sight of men his lot be cast—
 What are these often anyway but nailing
 Fast fading colours to a falling mast.

Yet would I have him never shirk his duty,
 But meet it gladly as it comes along,
 Deeming that courage is the truest beauty
 And answering misfortune with a song.

A trusted friend or two to stand beside him,
 Whom he has gained by golden actions done—
 These are the things that I would have to guide him,
 These are the best of life, my tender little son.

MARGARET J. DUNLOP.

Margaret J. Dunlop was born in Somersetshire, but is descended on her father's side from a line of Ayrshire farmers—Dunlops, Gemmells, and Campbells. At the age of eleven years she removed north with her parents to Kilmarnock, where she has since resided, and has engaged in fancy needlework business for nearly a quarter of a century.

Miss Dunlop is a fluent writer, and many of her poems and stories have been composed in moments whilst her hands were engaged on some simple task that required no special mental effort.

The "guid auld Scottish tongue" of her forefathers appeals to her more strongly than any other, and she fondly recalls the fact that she could read the poems of Robert Burns when only five years of age.

CHRISTMAS BELLS.

Hark! the Christmas bells are pealing, loud and long, o'er hill and valley;

And re-echoing in the city with a joyous, sweet refrain,
Telling out the old, old story that each year wins golden glory
From the wondrous Incarnation, free from taint of earthly stain.

Christmas bells ring out their music with a sweet and holy cadence,
Worthy of the gracious message, "Peace on earth, from shore
to shore,"

Teaching hearts weighed down by sorrow from their message joy
to borrow,

Since such sorrow was the garment which the little Christ child
wore.

Pealing forth on Christmas morning with a pæan of joy and worship,
As the angels sang to shepherds when the Word of flesh was born;
Let our worship be the healing of some old, hard, bitter feeling,
Melting in the Child King's presence ere the light of Christmas
morn.

Joyful bells still tell the story that has echoed down the ages:

"Glory be to God the Highest," who hath sent His only Son;
Show we glory forth by blessing where reign want and woe
distressing,

Lending hands to bear the burden of some worn and weary one.

Christmas bells are sweetly ringing over cottage, hall, and alley,
Telling out their glorious tidings to the peasant and the peer,
Spreading forth the grand old story of a Saviour, pure and lowly,
Born to save the trembling sinner from a load of guilty fear.

Christmas bells proclaim the story over continent and island:
 How the mighty King of Heaven laid aside His kingly crown
 To become an infant lowly—He, the great, the high, the holy—
 And in meekness bow His spirit to a harsh world's bitter frown.

Christmas bells peal forth their music from the northland to the
 southland,

Whilst the people blend their voices in a mighty hymn of praise;
 And the angels' faces glisten as they to the echo listen
 Of the song they sang to shepherds kneeling wrapt in deep amaze.

AFTER MANY YEARS.

Does she regret the early sacrifice
 From which a dull, grey, weary life hath grown?
 Ah, no! for she hath pierced the depths which else
 Her tender loving soul could ne'er have known.

Does she regret her youth's great sacrifice—
 Its vanished joys; the fair luxurious home,
 The life of promise as a summer day
 Unmarred by cloud athwart the azure dome?

Does she regret—sad heart—the sacrifice
 Sometimes when life is dark, and friends are few,
 And memory spans the intervening years
 To one who out of all the world was true?

If then, perchance, regret doth mar the calm,
 There comes the vision of a dear dead face,
 For whom the sacrifice was made complete;
 And in her soul regret can find no place.

Can she regret the morning sacrifice
 That now, at eventide, brings light divine,
 And day by day as life draws near its close
 Makes shafts of glory round each footstep shine?

Dare she regret that tear-dimmed sacrifice?
 Not so! for self is lost. A wider love—
 A mighty love for God's great human host
 Has swept her soul like music from above.

Can she regret the lifelong sacrifice
 That God has willed to be her lasting crown,
 When o'er her brow the shadows gently fall,
 And she, in bliss, shall lay the grey life down?



ROBERT THOMSON TERRAS.

Robert Thomson Terras toils amid the grime and Babel-
 noises of an engine-shop; nevertheless, when the Muse deigns
 to visit him amid such uncongenial surroundings he listens to

her witching persuasiveness and dons the mantle of the bard. Mr Terras was born near Airdrie, but his parents belonged to Kilmarnock, and removed thither when Robert was little more than a year old. After receiving a fairly good education, partly in Kilmarnock and partly in Springburn, he entered the office of Hyde Park Locomotive Works as a clerk, but a few years later began a term of apprenticeship as engine-fitter, which he finished in the Railway Company's shops at Kilmarnock. From this service he entered the employment of the Glenfield Company, Kilmarnock, afterwards removing to Ayr, and engaging as a mechanic in the railway engine sheds. Mr Terras is a member of Newton-upon-Ayr Burns Club, and has signalized himself in connection therewith by composing Burnsiana verse.

BURNS, THE TOILERS' FRIEN'.

When Spring comes in and birdies sing,
And sweet wee flowerets blaw,
Then I delight to view ilk sicht
At Nature's welcome ca' ;
But when the sun tak's doon the west,
And darkness veils the scene,
I by the cheery ingle rest
Wi' Burns, the toilers' frien'.

In simmer, where the roses bend
In blushes o'er the stream,
Where lovers stray at close o' day
To dream Love's gowden dream.
Wi' honest Nature I converse
'Mid fairy-haunted scenes,
And find that Burns in Nature's verse
Mak's man and Nature frien's.

When misty-eyed rich Autumn peeps
O'er fields of gowden grain,
My joyous heart the bounty reaps,
My voice swells to the strain.
"The Barley Rigs" or sweet "Lea Rig"
At e'enin' I rehearse;
I carena for the warld a fig
When blest wi' Rabbie's verse.

When wintry showers sweep o'er the plain,
And howls the bitter blast,
In pensive mood I oft complain
For those by Fate outcast.
To cheer the heart then wife and weans
Draw roun' and sing by turns,
And soon the heart its joy regains,
Made licht wi' Rabbie Burns.

FRANK A. KELLY.

Frank A. Kelly has appeared frequently in the local and provincial press as a poet, the daily routine of a pawnbroker's office being found powerless to scare away the sweet spirit of Poesy from his mind. Mr Kelly is a native of Glasgow, but has been in residence for some years in Kilmarnock, being employed as an assistant pawnbroker. "Of Auld Killie," says our poet, "I am as proud as a 'shire man born,' and the beauties of 'Queenly Ayrshire' I count it a privilege to move among." When in Glasgow Mr Kelly was a member of Cowcaddens Ward Committee, and held for a time the Vice-Chairmanship of Glasgow Assistant Pawnbrokers' Association. He is described as a good speaker and a keen debater, and his services have frequently been in demand as a secretary for various organizations. Without the use of notes Mr Kelly, when only sixteen years of age, addressed a political meeting for upwards of an hour, proving himself to be the happy possessor of what Scotsmen call "a guid gift o' the gab." He has been composing poetry since the days of his boyhood, poems and short sketches from his pen appearing at intervals under the *nom de plume* of "Kelvin Clyde," and as frequently under his own name.

LITTLE BABY BLUE EYES.

Little baby blue eyes, with the roguish smile,
Dancing in your mother's arms, cooing all the while,
You have been our tyrant, and reign this second year,
Still we love your government, merry little dear.

Little baby blue eyes, soft and rounded arm,
Velvet dimpled cheeks—ah! there's no other charm
Like our clinging, cuddling, sweetest infant girl;
Oh! we wouldn't give you, not for wealth of pearl.

Little baby blue eyes, angel art and grace
Show the trace of Heaven shining in your face;
Dainty little maiden, full of every wile;
Oh! 'tis sweet to watch you, playing all the while.

Little baby blue eyes, running all about;
Now you're into mischief, there's a romp and shout;
Ah! you've lost your dolly, search beneath the chair;
Why, you little prattler, where's the dolly's hair?

Little baby blue eyes, when you're in your cot
Fairy whispers stir you, smiles are coming hot;
Mother takes an anxious look, even as she sings,
For God's angels sometimes take babies on their wings.

Little baby blue eyes, kingly sceptre's sway
Ne'er marshalled subjects in honour's proud array
Readier to give homage than we to yield to thee,
Winner of your every wish, Infant Majesty!

THOSE THOUGHTS OF LONG AGO.

When the glitter wears off the gold,
And youth's hopes fade away;
When once fond beating hearts grow cold,
And friendship's bonds decay;
When the joys of life are blighted,
And tears of sorrow flow—
Then the path of age is lighted
With the thoughts of long ago.

Oh, sweet the charm those thoughts can give
Of happy childhood years;
Their joys are joys that sweetly live,
Their sorrow but endears.
Though fancy's cherished dreams take wing
And waken pangs of woe,
Our sweetest song we'll ever sing
In praise of long ago.

'Tis now we see the happy dream,
The joys of things we knew,
Fast fading in the daylight beam
Ere evening sheds its dew.
No potent charm, or pleasure sweet,
Has half the holy glow
That used in other days to greet
The joys of long ago.



